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1874 - 1874

The Pittsburgh COMMERCIAL,

DAILY AND WEEKLY

LEADING

Pennsylvania Paper.

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As a Business Paper,

WASHINGTON, December 21, 1873.

HISTORY OF THE VIRGINIUS TROUBLE—OFFICIAL DISPATCHES OF COMMANDER BRAINE.

Rear Admiral Scott has sent to the Secretary of the Navy a large number of documents connected with the capture of the Virginius and the execution which followed it. These include the list of 103 who were in prison at Santiago De Cuba, thirteen of whom were shot. But four Americans are among the number given. Those who were executed in addition to the thirteen above mentioned, were in jail only a few hours, with the exception of Captain Fry, who was not taken to that place. According to the official report concerning the mode of trial by court martial, Captain Fry declined to answer all questions put to him, protesting that by the laws of nations he and his crew had committed no offence, that justified their immediate treatment or trial as pirates, claiming to be in command of an American merchant vessel furnished with all properly certified papers which he had delivered to the boarding officers of the capturing vessel. J. N. Rowe, of Rockland, Maine, deposed, at Kingston, Jamaica, that from his knowledge of navigation, the Virginius when captured, could not have been less than seventy miles from the coast of Cuba.

The report from Madrid that the Spanish government has decided to make a formal demand upon the United States for the return of the Virginius and passengers and crew, is not credited here, for the reason that they were delivered to the United States by virtue of a procotel between the two countries, subject to judicial proceedings.

Commander Braine, in his letter to the Secretary of the Navy, dated at Santiago de Cuba, November 30, communicating the information he obtained about the Virginius says: You have my full letter and protest to his excellency Senor Brigadier Commandante General Du A Morales, that I protested against any further punishment to any of the officers, crew and passengers of the Virginius, irrespective of their nationality, and if any more were ordered to be executed I must be informed before it took place, as I claimed that the American flag protected all. I have taken means to circulate it ashore in the city, that if any of the prisoners taken from the Virginius are executed, I will sunk every Spanish gunboat and other Spanish property here that I can get at. I feel assured that this rumor has had a good effect. You will observe by my interview, that the General asks in reply to my question that in any parts of the world the already complicated affair would be to deliver up all people now alive belonging to the Virginius. In what manner could that be done? I replied: "By putting them in boats and putting them on board the ship I have the honor to command, restoring them under the flag from which they were taken." The Governor replied that he could not do so without orders from his superiors.

Commander Braine asked if the people taken from the American steamer Virginius were executed by authority of the highest ruling power in the Island or by order of government officials here. The Governor answered "By the government here." The Commander asked if the same power that ordered their execution could not order their release and delivery to him.

The Governor replied in the negative; the people taken from the Virginius were executed by an order previously issued by the Admiral commanding the naval forces of the Islands, and the other persons by the authority of an order issued by General De Rodas.

Commander Braine—"But were there not passengers on board the American steamer Virginius?"

The Governor—"You must recollect that there were many Spaniards among the passengers, and consequently them a deserter from our army on this Island."

Commander Braine—"Yes, but they were taken from an American steamer on the high seas."

The Governor—"On the night of the arrival of the Virginius at this port, in looking over papers, an order was found issued by the late Captain General, and it was under his order that the trial and executions took place."

Commander Braine—"But I have to remind you that both the United States and British governments protested against that order, and told the Spanish government that they would not allow any such interference, and that the most that the United States government could admit would be the confiscation of the vessel and cargo."

Commander Braine having received assurances that his dispatch to the United States government would be forwarded without interruption, thanked the Governor for his courtesy, and withdrew, after delivering in person the written protest relative to the officers, crew and passengers of the American steamer Virginius.

NO SALUTE TO THE FLAG—SPAIN SATISFIES THE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORTHLESSNESS OF THE PAPERS OF THE VIRGINIUS—VESSEL AND GUILTY PARTIES TO BE PROCEEDED AGAINST.

It has been known for some days that the Spanish government has furnished evidence with regard to the Virginius and her right to bear the flag of the United States, and that the President submitted the evidence to the Attorney General for his opinion thereon. It seems now to be understood in official circles that the Attorney General has given an opinion that the vessel had forfeited the right to bear the flag of the United States, and at the time of her capture was carrying it improperly and without right and impropriety. In view of this opinion our government will, in accordance with the terms of the protocol, institute inquiry and adopt proceedings against the Virginius and against any of the persons who may appear to have been guilty of illegal acts in connection therewith. As Spain has proven to the satisfaction of the United States, according to the Attorney General's opinion that the Virginius was at the time of her capture carrying the United States flag without right, and improperly, the salute to the flag on the 25th day of December will be dispensed with as now not necessarily required, but the United States will expect a disclaimer of an intent of indignity to its flag in the act which was committed. From the proof submitted by Spain, it appears that the clearance papers of the Virginius were obtained by perjury.

What It Costs to Run the Government—The Estimates from the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches—Foreign Intercourse—Military and Naval Establishments—Pensions—Public Works—Postal Service—Miscellaneous—Specific and indefinite Appropriations—A Comparison of Estimates and Appropriations— Revenues— Disbursements—The Prospective Deficit—A Favorable Outlook.

Special Correspondence of the Pittsburgh Commercial.

WASHINGTON, D. C., December 22, 1873.

With the growth of population and wealth has naturally come an expansion of the settled area of the country. Regions but a few years ago traversed by wild Indians have been brought under contribution to the husbandman, miner and manufacturer; settlements have been established, villages, towns and cities have sprung up, and new States, each an empire in itself, have been admitted into the National Union. This increase necessitates enlarged expenditures as it also is, and should be, attended with larger receipts. The temporary derangement of business, though to be regretted in every respect, has not been without its advantages in so straitening the finances of the government as to demand a thorough investigation of everything respecting the revenues and disbursements. All items estimated for are under laws of Congress, though perhaps in every instance, except where the amount is absolutely fixed, the sums are in excess of those required. There are two reasons for this; one is to allow a margin for the chances of a reduction, and the other to secure the largest reasonable allowance. While the subject of reducing estimates is before Congress and the Executive, it will doubtless be of interest to know what it takes to run the immense government machine. The estimates are classified under the various heads of civil establishment, foreign intercourse, the military department, naval establishment, Indian affairs, public works, postal service, miscellaneous, permanent appropriations, and those given are for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1875.

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT.—Legislative. *Senate*—Salaries and traveling expenses of Senators, $60,000; salaries of officers and employees of the Senate, $41,630; temporary clerks, $11,500; contingent expenses, $199,237. *House of Representatives*—Salaries and traveling expenses of members, delegates, &c., $1,000,000; salaries of officers and employees, $218,497; contingent expenses, $267,142. Office of the Congressional Printer, $13,917; contingent expenses, $1,000. Library of Congress, $30,000; purchase of books, $13,000; contingent, $2,500; Botanic Garden, $12,146; improving garden, $5,000; Court of Claims, $39,575; total Legislative, $2,261,465. Executive—Executive proper, including salaries of the President and Vice President, and expenses of the executive office, $81,900; Department of State, $221,220; Treasury, $3,561,000; independent treasury, $549,477; Mints and Assay offices, $1,333,195; Territorial governments, $261,675; Internal Revenue, $8,190,000; Customs, $2,724,000; miscellaneous, including saving stations, revenue cutter service, Marine Hospital establishment, &c., $1,478,382; total, $12,390,671. War Department—Office of the Secretary, staff, &c., $876,886. Navy Department—Office of the Secretary and bureaus, $146,910. Interior Department—Office of the Secretary and bureaus, $1,774,880; public lands, $724,000; Indian miscellaneous, Government Hospital for the Insane, Columbia Hospital for Women and Lying-in Asylum, Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, and Smithsonian Institution (National Museum), $259,285; total, $2,786,925. Post Office Department, $664,472; Department of Justice, $910,050; Department of Agriculture, $250,240; total executive, $24,000,000. Judicial—Supreme Court of the United States, District Courts, Courts in the District of Columbia, District Attorneys, United States Marshals, &c., $3,409,760; total of the Civil establishment is $25,260,830.

FOREIGN INTERCOURSE—Diplomatic salaries, $350,500; secretaries of legation, $40,000; contingent expenses of foreign missions, $100,000; consular salaries, $412,500; contingent expenses of consuls, $131,850; and for interpreters, marshals, &c., $50,000; for the commission to United States and Mexican claims, and Northern Boundary Commissioners and miscellaneous; total foreign intercourse, $3,347,304.

MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT—Including the Commanding General's office, the various staff departments and military academy, and pay of all, $34,881,618.

NAVAL ESTABLISHMENT—General service and bureaus, naval academy and marine corps, $19,251,925.

INDIAN AFFAIRS—Indian service, current and contingent expenses, the fulfilling treaties and general incidental expenses, $6,765,779.

PENSIONS—Army and navy, $30,480,000.

PUBLIC WORKS—Under the Treasury Department, public buildings, $4,145,000; lighthouses, beacons and fog signals, $2,116,300; and revenue marine service, building a vessel, $125,000; total under Treasury Department $10,387,749. Under the War Department, armories and arsenals, $955,954; fortifications and other works of defense, $3,601,000; improvements of rivers, $1,501,540; for the buildings and grounds around Washington, $1,000,100; and military academy, $43,500; total under the War Department, $21,355,094. Under the Navy Department, yards and stations, $864,589; under the Department of the Interior, $408,204; Department of Justice, $39,000; and Department of Agriculture, $25,500. Total for Public Works, $33,400,587.

POSTAL SERVICE—$6,811,363, viz.: Expenditures, $33,929,912; postal revenues, $29,293,549; deficiency in postal revenues, $4,636,363. The balance for steamship service and pavements.

MISCELLANEOUS—Public printing and binding, $2,259,148; judgments of Court of Claims, $2,000,000; light house establishment, $1,800,000; mint service, $625,000; and miscellaneous under the treasury, $1,053,500; signal office, $365,325; and miscellaneous under the War Department, $1,262,000; surveying public lands, $1,061,670. Total miscellaneous, $10,704,381.

The permanent specific and indefinite appropriations, including the sinking fund, $29,191,369; interest on the public debt, $88,000,000; interest on Pacific Railway stock, $8,377,410; amount, $125,485,678.

A comparison of the above estimates with the appropriations, shows as follows:

	Estimates for 1875.	Appropriations for 1874.
Legislative Establishment	$2,261,465 62	$3,966,177 98
Executive Establishm't	17,896,674 90	17,869,741 69
Judicial Establishment	3,409,760 00	3,453,000 00
Foreign Intercourse	3,347,304 00	1,662,525 00
Military Establishment	34,881,618 10	33,124,939 11
Naval Establishment	19,251,925 56	22,500,957 61
Indian Affairs	6,765,779 61	5,589,219 30
Pensions	30,480,000 00	29,430,000 00
Public Works	33,169,287 10	24,843,833 61
Postal Service	6,811,363 00	7,296,602 00
Miscellaneous	10,704,381 42	8,716,614 50
Permanent Appropriations	125,521,237 21	145,945,570 49
Grand totals	$319,198,736 82	$306,009,372 24

The estimates and appropriations arranged under the head of departments, are as follows:

	Estimates for 1875.	Appropriations for 1874.
Congress	$ 9,281,570 03	$ 6,518,793 47
Executive Proper	81,900 00	81,900 00
Department of State	3,672,924 00	1,937,845 60
Treasury Department	123,884,905 15	125,069,877 97
War Department	60,188,923 59	45,519,574 66
Navy Department	20,268,435 14	24,231,099 65
Interior Department	41,758,853 61	40,697,781 52
Post Office Dep't	7,345,835 00	7,783,914 00
Dep't of Justice	3,951,800 00	3,962,940 00
Dep't of Agriculture	1,765,696 00	1,651,690 00
Grand total	$319,198,736 82	$306,009,372 24

To meet the expenses of the fiscal year, ending June 30, 1873, the revenues were derived from the following sources:

	Gross.	Net.
Customs service	$199,666,092 06	$188,067,838 65
Int. revenue service	113,968,941 24	112,741,772 99
Public lands	3,646,671 05	2,831,673 95
Miscellaneous	26,126,069 79	19,579,694 10
Grand total	$333,788,904 47	$314,026,286 59

The actual disbursements for the same period were as follows:

Legislative	$7,063,789 96
Executive	87,589 33
State Department	1,985,212 36
Treasury "	140,854,604 88
War "	46,036,984 10
Navy "	23,114,997 82
Interior "	42,566,841 04
Post Office "	4,242,286 80
Agricultural Department	226,941 77
Department of Justice	3,961,024 52
Judiciary	3,720,302 03
Total actual expenses	$270,633,227 25

The falling off of the revenue during the past few months, having compelled the use of the reserves finds the government already about twenty millions short and this is a serious amount concern is as to the best means of covering this prospective deficit of the year. There are two ways proposed, one is by a temporary loan, and the other by an increase of taxes. Within the past week there has been a favorable turn in the revenues a slight increase being indicated both in internal taxes and customs, which is encouraging and should not set aside all necessity of creating additional taxes, and possibly a resort to the proposed temporary loan. This taken in connection with the resolution on the part of Congress to retrench in every manner possible, increased the probability of weathering through without resort to either of the means suggested. So that after all the result will be highly favorable and leave the financial condition of the government in a better condition than ever. If Congress succeeds in reducing the expenses of the government, say thirty millions, and the receipts approximate, as they now promise, the total of last year, it must be easily seen that the financial status of the government will be better than before the panic, for in addition to a restored revenue there will be practical retrenchment in the expenditures in every department.

DEB. R. K.

The Virginius.

OPINION OF ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAMS.

THE VESSEL HAD NO RIGHT TO THE FLAG.

Her Papers Illegal and Registry Void.

Exempt on the High Seas, However, from Spanish Interference.

The following is the opinion of Attorney General Williams in the Virginius case:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
WASHINGTON, December 17, 1873.

Hon. Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State:

SIR—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst., submitting to me a large number of documents and depositions, and asking for my opinion as to whether or not the Virginius, at the time of her capture by the Spanish man-of-war Fernando, was entitled to carry the flag of the United States, and whether or not she was carrying it improperly and without right at that time. These questions arise under the protocol of the 29th ult. between the Spanish Minister and the Secretary of State, in which, among other things, it is agreed that on the 25th inst. Spain shall salute the flag of the United States; but it is further provided that if Spain should prove to the satisfaction of the United States that the Virginius was not entitled to carry the flag of the United States, and was carrying it at the time of her capture without right and improperly, the salute will be spontaneously dispensed with, as in such case not being necessarily requirable, but the United States will expect in such case a disclaimer of an intent of indignity to its flag in the act which was committed.

Section 1 of the act of December 31, 1792, provides that ships or vessels registered pursuant to such act, and no other, except such as shall be duly qualified according to law for carrying or coasting trade, and denominated or deemed ships or vessels of the United States, alone are entitled to the benefits and privileges appertaining to such ships. Section 4 of the same act provides for an oath by which, among other things, to obtain the register, a person claiming an interest is required to swear that there is not a subject or citizen of any foreign prince or State, directly or indirectly, by way of trust, confidence or otherwise, interested in such ship or vessel or in the profits or issues thereof. Obviously, therefore, no vessel in which a foreigner is directly or indirectly interested, is entitled to a United States register, and if one is obtained by a false oath as to that point and the fact is that the vessel is owned or partly owned by foreigners, she cannot be deemed a vessel of the United States or entitled to the benefits or privileges appertaining to such vessels.

The Virginius was registered in New York on the 20th of September, 1870, in the name of Patterson, who made oath as required by law, but the depositions submitted abundantly show that the real person was not the owner at that time, but that the vessel was the property of certain Cuban citizens in New York, who furnished the necessary funds for her purchase.

J. F. Murphy, who commanded said vessel, when she left New York with a certificate of her register in the name of Patterson, testified positively that he entered into an agreement to command the vessel for an interest as between Quesada, Moro, Patterson and others, at which it was distinctly understood that the Virginius belonged to Quesada, Moro and other Cubans, and that Patterson was only entitled to him receipts for the purchase money and for repairs and supplies upon said steamer, and explained to him how said funds were raised among the Cubans in New York. Adolphe de Varona, who was Secretary of the Cuban mission in New York, at the time the Virginius was purchased, and afterward sailed in her as Quesada's chief of staff, testifies that he was acquainted with all the details of the transactions and knows that the Virginius was purchased with the funds of Cubans, and with the understanding and arrangement that Patterson should appear as the nominal owner, because foreigners could not obtain a United States register for a vessel. Francis Howen, Charles Smith, Edward Greenwood, John McCann, Matthew Murphy, Ambrose Rawlings, Thomas Gallagher, John Furlong, Thomas Anderson and George W. Miller, who were employed upon the Virginius in various capacities after she was registered in the name of Patterson, testify clearly to the effect that they were informed and understood while they were upon that vessel that they belonged to Quesada and the Cubans represented by him, and that he navigated, controlled and treated such vessel in all respects as though it was his property. Nothing occurs to weaken the force of this testimony, though witnesses were generally subjected to cross examination, in which every detail of the circumstances of the case tend to its corroboration. With the oath for registry, the statute requires a bond to be given, signed by the owner, the captain and one or more sureties, but there were no sureties upon the bond given by Patterson and Shepherd. Pains have been taken to ascertain if there was any insurance upon the vessel, but nothing of the kind has been found and Quesada, Varona and other Cubans who took passage upon the Virginius, instead of going on board at the wharf in the usual way, went aboard of her after the vessel had left the harbor of New York.

I cannot do otherwise than to hold, upon this evidence, that Patterson's oath was false and that the register obtained by the name was a fraud upon the navigation laws of the United states. Assuming the question to be what appears to conform to the intent of the protocol, whether or not the Virginius at the time of her capture had a right, as against the United States, to carry the American flag, I am of opinion that she had no such right, because she had not been registered according to law. But I am also of opinion that she was as much exempt from interference on the high seas by another power on that ground, as though she had been lawfully registered. Spain, no doubt, has a right to capture a vessel with an American register and carrying the American flag, found in her own waters assisting or endeavoring to assist the insurrection in Cuba; but she has no right to capture such a vessel on the high seas upon any supposition of a violation of neutrality or the navigation laws of the United States, she was on her way to assist such rebellion. Spain would do wrong to the territory and people from the hostile attack of what is, or appears to be, an American vessel, but she has no jurisdiction whatever over such vessel is on the high seas in violation of any law of the United States. Spain cannot rightfully raise that question as to the Virginius. The United States only can do so, and then only through the protocol, they have agreed to do it; and, accordingly that agreement and without admitting that Spain would otherwise have any interest in the question, I decide that the Virginius, at the time of her capture, was without right and improperly carrying the American flag.

Very respectfully,
GEO. H. WILLIAMS,
Attorney General.

(Signed.)

NEW YORK, December 22.—The *Tribune's* Key West telegram gives an account of the surrender of Spanish prisoners by Lieutenant Commander Braine, of the Juniata. It appears that the Spanish authorities, to the last moment, kept the poor wretches in ignorance of their prospective release and, with base inhumanity, led them to suppose that they were to be executed. Priests were with them, taking their confessions and dying declarations, and imploring them to look to God for pardon. They were taken out of the prison in despair, but on their way to the slaughter pen, as they supposed, their eyes fell upon the Juniata flying the flag of the United States. When they realized the truth, a scene occurred which beggars description. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds. They were speedily transferred to the deck of the Juniata and gave vent to the most extravagant but touching demonstrations of joy, embracing each other, some shedding tears, others kissing, and others audibly offering thanks to the Almighty for their deliverance from the horrors of their dungeon and the prospect of an ignominious death. On the night before the surrender, the officers and crew of the Juniata were stationed at quarters, her guns being turned on the city, the Spanish officers having been expected to an open riot by the rumor that the surrender was to take place. A large number of volunteers went in a body to the Governor's palace and Wiegel's premises, and to attempt the capture of the Juniata, saying that they could do it with knives alone. The Governor refused to grant permission. Our officers believe that the application was made in earnest and not a few regret that it was not favorably entertained, as the Juniata alone, not to speak of the Kansas and Lackawanna, could have made short and a match for their assailants. On the arrival of the Pinta at Santiago, orders came to the ship from Commander Braine for the paymaster to issue all the blankets and pea jackets in his department to the prisoners, who were hardly fit to be seen in their rags. This was speedily done, but as there was still great destitution, orders came for every man on board to give his own blankets and wearing apparel in the good cause, the promise being made that all would be replaced on the arrival of the ship at Key West. The officers and men cheerfully complied with this order, only preferring that it should be issued as a request, in which case they would have obeyed with just as much alacrity. Every heart was touched by the pitiable condition of the prisoners. The poor fellows report that they were barbarously treated. The surrender took place at Moro Castle, six miles below Santiago. A receipt was given for the prisoners. It was reported in Santiago that when it was found that the Virginius had been towed out of the harbor of Havana, a large number of naval officers of high grade tendered their resignations to the home government by telegraph.

VILLE DU HAVRE.

Official Report of the Captain of the Loch Earn.

NEW YORK, December 19—Captain Surmont, of the Ville Du Havre, has made a statement concerning the disaster to the vessel and those on board, but it adds little to what was previously known of the tragical occurrence. He says: "I got up from a sofa at two, and left my cabin. At this moment a ship under full sail showed herself all at once on our path and I had hardly time to jump on the bridge when the Ville Du Havre was already struck right in the side opposite the mainmast. The damage was enormous, being a hole of at least sixteen feet, rendering it certain that the ship could remain very little time afloat. The engines were stopped at once, and the valves were opened. The water rushed in so quickly there was not time to close the door of the bulkhead which separated the engine from the boilers; besides, the bulkhead of the coal bunker having been forced into the engine room, the water poured in that way into the boiler room. I estimate there were not more than twelve minutes between the collision and the sinking of the ship. Capt. Robertson, of the Loch Earn, who says he saw me, says ten minutes, others says fifteen minutes, but there is only two or three minutes in question. I must say that in that short interval the passengers were examples of coolness, calmness and resignation, and at the dreadful time of this lamentable occurrence, when 355 persons were justly alarmed at the thought of certain death at any moment, and their only hope of safety was disappearing, the women were the first to give the example. Captain Surmont's story of the failure to get boats afloat does not differ from that told by the telegraph. The rapid filling of the vessel and falling of the masts were the causes. He also says: "I have the satisfaction since the wreck of learning, by questioning the survivors of the crew, that every one was at his post, that each did his duty, and that all went down with the vessel, and were picked up from the sea. The loss of the unfortunate officers who commanded the watch, at the moment of the collision, renders me unable to give the exact account of the occurrence before taking command myself; but I can declare that the Loch Earn, to which I showed my ship's side, and which consequently had nothing to fear from me, struck directly against my vessel, at a risk of smashing herself as well, when by a slight stroke of the helm to starboard, or it was almost all that this terrible collision might have been averted."

NEW YORK, December 20.—London papers of the 8th, received to-day, contain the official report of Captain Robertson, of the Loch Earn, which sunk the steamer Ville du Havre. It is as follows, in so far as it relates to the collision:

"November 22d, at 2 A. M., in latitude 46° 54' north, longitude 35° 6' west, wind S. S. W., true, ship braced up on port tack, heading by standard compass S. W. by W., or W. 12° S. true, a steamer's masthead was seen from one to two points on the port bow. Our side lights were at once burning brightly. Shortly after we saw the steamer's three lights. She was coming straight for us. Almost immediately she showed only her port and mastnead lights and was so close that apparently no time was lost. After a short time we rang our bell and ported helm, as we thought she was coming too near, the steamer still showing only her port light. When close to our bow she showed her starboard light and she was across our bow. A collision was inevitable. An order was given to back our afteryards, but before the braces could be let go, the two vessels came in collision, the Loch Earn striking the steamer amidships. The ships immediately separated. We threw our afteryards aback; half the crew then shortened sail and the remainder cleared away the port lifeboat. The carpenter, being at the pumps, reported that the ship was making no water and then went below and found the two vessels gone and the bow smashed completely in, but the collision bulkhead was apparently uninjured. A boat from the Ville du Havre then came alongside, containing an officer and four men. I asked if the steamer was much injured. He said she was injured but did not say she wanted assistance, and no signals of distress were made by the steamer. I was able, at the time that the boat was sent to render us assistance, while talking to the officer, I saw that the steamer apparently filling fast, and lowered the port life-boat at once in charge of the second officer and four men, who made towards the sinking ship. Our cutter and starboard life-boat were then sent away and in a few minutes dispatched to the scene of the catastrophy, their only guide being the cries of the drowning people. The steamer having disappeared, we kept our boats out till daylight, until every one floating among the wreck was picked up. We succeeded in saving eighty-four persons out of three hundred and a large proportion having gone down with the steamer. The Ville du Havre only floated about fifteen minutes after being struck."

Captain Robertson then proceeds to give an account of his failing in with the Trimountain and transferring the steamer's passengers and crew to her, with the exception of Messrs. Cook and Wise and one of the steamer's firemen, who was injured. He then gives an account of his struggles to save his vessel, the leaking condition of the disaster is told by the captain of the Loch Earn: A lady swam alongside with a child in her arms a rope was thrown to her, which she caught, and immediately after the child, upholding on by one arm and with the other round her child, her strength failed her and the child was lost; but the poor mother was hauled on board.

An imposing requiem mass was solemnized at Havre on the 8th inst., in honor of the victims. The Cathedral, draped in black from roof to floor, was filled by a vast congregation of five thousand persons. The catafalque was surrounded by sailors of the Republican navy, and all the civic, naval and military dignitaries of the city and place were present. The cure's sermon was interrupted by bursts of grief from the worshipers. All the ships in the harbor dressed their flags half mast, and all business was at a standstill. The public subscription amounts to forty thousand francs, including the contributions of the company. The singers of the Paris opera are to give a performance of "La Favorita," at Havre for the benefit of the families of the victims.

Professor Louis of the Geneva Theological Seminary, in which Cesar Protier (lost by the Ville du Havre disaster) was professor, writes to this country asking if said professor would do well to publish a history and people from the hostile attack of what is, or appears to be, an American vessel, but she has no jurisdiction whatever over such vessel is on the high seas in violation of any law of the United States. Spain cannot rightfully raise that question as to the Virginius. The United States only can do so, and then only through the protocol, they have agreed to do it; and, accordingly that agreement and without admitting that Spain would otherwise have any interest in the question, I decide that the Virginius, at the time of her capture, was without right and improperly carrying the American flag.

Very respectfully,
(Signed.) GEO. H. WILLIAMS,
Attorney General.

NEW YORK, December 22.—The *Tribune's* Key West telegram gives an account of the surrender of Spanish prisoners by Lieutenant Commander Braine, of the Juniata. It appears that the Spanish authorities, to the last moment, kept the poor wretches in ignorance of their prospective release and, with base inhumanity, led them to suppose that they were to be executed. Priests were with them, taking their confessions and dying declarations, and imploring them to look to God for pardon. They were taken out of the prison in despair, but on their way to the slaughter pen, as they supposed, their eyes fell upon the Juniata flying the flag of the United States. When they realized the truth, a scene occurred which beggars description. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds. They were speedily transferred to the deck of the Juniata and gave vent to the most extravagant but touching demonstrations of joy, embracing each other, some shedding tears, others kissing, and others audibly offering thanks to the Almighty for their deliverance from the horrors of their dungeon and the prospect of an ignominious death. On the night before the surrender, the officers and crew of the Juniata were stationed at quarters, her guns being turned on the city, the Spanish officers having been expected to an open riot by the rumor that the surrender was to take place. A large number of volunteers went in a body to the Governor's palace and Wiegel's premises, and to attempt the capture of the Juniata, saying that they could do it with knives alone. The Governor refused to grant permission. Our officers believe that the application was made in earnest and not a few regret that it was not favorably entertained, as the Juniata alone, not to speak of the Kansas and Lackawanna, could have made short and a match for their assailants. On the arrival of the Pinta at Santiago, orders came to the ship from Commander Braine for the paymaster to issue all the blankets and pea jackets in his department to the prisoners, who were hardly fit to be seen in their rags. This was speedily done, but as there was still great destitution, orders came for every man on board to give his own blankets and wearing apparel in the good cause, the promise being made that all would be replaced on the arrival of the ship at Key West. The officers and men cheerfully complied with this order, only preferring that it should be issued as a request, in which case they would have obeyed with just as much alacrity. Every heart was touched by the pitiable condition of the prisoners. The poor fellows report that they were barbarously treated. The surrender took place at Moro Castle, six miles below Santiago. A receipt was given for the prisoners. It was reported in Santiago that when it was found that the Virginius had been towed out of the harbor of Havana, a large number of naval officers of high grade tendered their resignations to the home government by telegraph.

HAVANA ADVICES.

Rumored Trouble Between England and Spain—Punishment of Barriel Demanded—European Squadron Expected—The Salute to Our Flag—Virginius on Her Way Northward.

KEY WEST, December 20.—Information reached here yesterday, from Havana, that serious complications in regard to Cuba have arisen between the Spanish and British governments. The advices do not state the precise nature of the difficulties, but it has become known here that the British Consul General at Havana has received dispatches from Lord Granville, to instruct all naval commanders in the West Indies to immediately rendezvous in Cuban ports. It is stated that in official circles it is certainly known that the British government will assuredly demand the punishment of Burriel. The British admiral has left for St. Thomas, where he expects to be relieved.

Admiral Scott looks for the arrival of our European squadron in a few days, when Admiral Case, unless relieved, will assume command. It is now looked upon as certain that the salute to our flag, required by the terms of the protocol, will be made in as informal a manner as possible. The feeling among the officers of the squadron here, is one of much dissatisfaction.

The Virginius passed here yesterday, to the North, under charge of the Ossipee, in a leaky condition.

FORT WAYNE.

The New Street Lamps—A Gun with Testing his Small-arms on a Trespasser.

Special Dispatch to the Commercial.

FORT WAYNE, IND., December 18, 1873.

Last evening the first tes: of naptha to light the streets resulted in the explosion of two lamps, but with no damaging results.

A difficulty occurred in a gunsmiths shop this afternoon in which a trespasser was forced to retreat under the persuasion of a revolver drawn by Mr. Russell, the proprietor. A summons has been issued for the arrest of Russell.

ZANESVILLE, OHIO.

No Verdict in the Wolford Case—Probably Fatal Result of an Accident.

Special Dispatch to the Commercial.

ZANESVILLE, O., December 20, 1873.

The Wolford murder case was given to the jury at three o'clock this afternoon, and up to nine o'clock no verdict has been rendered.

Dr. George Blockson is growing weaker, and will not probably last over night. He fell from a wagon about two weeks ago and injured his head.

XLIII. CONGRESS.

FIRST SESSION.

WASHINGTON, D. C., December 18, 1873.

SENATE.

Mr. HOWE introduced a resolution instructing the Committee on Pensions to inquire into the expediency of placing on the pension roll the names of all honorably discharged soldiers and sailors of the war of 1812, irrespective of the terms of service. Passed.

Mr. WRIGHT asked that the House bill to establish the compensation of Senators, Representatives and Delegates be taken up. The bill was read twice and referred to the Committee on Civil Service and Retrenchment.

The morning hour having expired, the resolution reported by the Committee on Finance was taken up.

Mr. SHERMAN said it seemed to be the desire of the Senate to enlarge upon this debate. He did not propose to engage in it, but hoped the Senators would express their views, as it was the desire of the committee to ascertain as near as possible the wish of the Senate, and know whether such desire was for the enlargement or contraction of the currency, or a return to specie payment.

Mr. BOUTWELL looked with apprehension upon any plan to return to specie payment by way of contraction. The shock caused by contraction would be detrimental to both the private and public interests of the country. He favored maintaining the volume of currency at the minimum points established by law, and waiting for the development of the resources of the country. He had examined with care all propositions submitted to the Senate. They were principally of two sorts, contemplating either contraction or expansion; but he did not propose now to enter into an argument of the question. He felt it to be his duty to resist an expansion of the currency, as such a plan would postpone the day of return to specie payment. On the other hand, contraction would injure the business interests of the country.

Mr. HOWE thought there was a good, wholesome reason once for substituting paper for coin, but that that reason had passed long ago. He thought if the Government added a dollar to the volume of the currency, or, as he might term it, "four broken promises," it would be little less than the perpetration of a public crime. He hoped Congress would not authorize the enlargement of the circulation.

Mr. FERRY, of Michigan, did not believe there was much difference if the Senate on the question whether our currency or gold should be made the equivalent. The only difference was in the method of doing it. It could not be doubted that there was a prostration now in the financial interests of the country, and it was a very grave question whether this prostration was not augmented by a "let-alone" policy of legislation. He desired to dispel the illusion that the volume of currency regulated the price of coin, and that if it was increased, the value of currency, coin was lower than when we had a smaller value.

Mr. MORTON said the faith of the Government was pledged to redeem our greenbacks in coin. He did not deny that we should steadily keep in view the return to specie payments, but the question was whether this is the proper time to adopt such measures. There was a wrong time to do a right thing, and, in his opinion, this was not the time for us to return to specie. He was offered his protest against such language as that used by the Senator from Massachusetts (Sumner), that the country is dishonored. It did not seem to him to be creditable at any time for the close of the war to redeem our currency in coin.

Mr. SUMNER—Will the Senator allow me to ask whether, in this interval, any money or have not paid a considerable amount of the national debt—I think a larger amount than the outstanding legal tenders?

Mr. MORTON—Yes, sir, but we never had enough gold on hand at one time to authorize us, or make it safe for us to redeem these notes in coin.

Mr. SUMNER—My friend is aware that when he had gold we paid off the debt, instead of paying the running, daily obligations of the Government.

Mr. MORTON replied that had the daily obligations been so paid, the coin would have been taken up, and the treasury bankrupt, in forty-eight hours.

Mr. SUMNER—Not at the original suspension of specie payments, making our paper inconvertible, essentially a war measure to carry on war? and, therefore, should it not have been terminated immediately after the war?

Mr. MORTON—I agree with the Senator, and yet it does not change my course of argument. It was a war measure, and a war standing was, when the notes were issued, that they would be paid when the country was able. The war was over, but not the debt, but the consequences are upon us to-day, and one of them is that we are not practically able to redeem our notes. There is a sort of fatalism about specie payments. I had it once rather bad myself, but experience and lapse of time cured me. He was in favor of a return to specie payments when the conditions of the country would permit it. He inquired if this was the time to adopt a definite measure to return to specie payment, while a panic was in existence, and while we had a currency which should be in prosperous times. He denied that the panic facilitated matters for a return to specie payment.

Mr. MORRILL, of Vermont, inquired if the gentleman did not recognize the fact that during this panic there had been a large addition to the circulation by drawing on the forty-four millions reserve.

Mr. MORTON replied in the affirmative, and stated that the policy was beneficial to the country. The suspension of specie payments had generally been the result of war, and not of restraint. He wished it to be understood that the true relief for panics during the last hundred years had been from resuming, not contraction, and he did not believe they would cure ours. He favored a small addition to the volume of currency as the true remedy. The Government did all in its power to relieve the panic at the beginning, and the issue of a part of the forty four million reserve did much to restore confidence. The very knowledge that the reserve was being enlarged, induced the people to put their money out. He believed the panic could be shortened, and every day that it was shortened would be a great blessing. The English and French governments never let panics run their course, but did all in their power to shorten them. He believed that if the Government had in the beginning, put out the whole of that forty-four million reserve, the panic would have been stopped immediately. The future of a substitute for it, as follows: "Be it enacted, &c., That so much of the act of March 3d, 1873, as provides for the increase of the compensation of Members of Congress and the several officers and employees, either of the House of Congress or both, be and the same is hereby repealed, and the salaries

Weekly Commercial.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1873.

THE official returns from the whole State, except McKean county, show a majority of 144,121 for the new Constitution.

THERE has of late been some agitation in England for Parliamentary salary, but it will not be apt to derive much impetus from recent struggles over the same matter in the Congress of our own country.

A MOVEMENT is said to be on foot among the Irishmen of New York to induce the presidents of the Irish societies, without reference to creed or politics, to call a public meeting and form a branch home rule association. Excellent—if it relates to the government of themselves; for he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city.

CONGRESSMEN are now, as a general thing, mingling with their constituents. This is therefore a good time for the latter to make themselves heard concerning the imperative necessity for retrenchment and reform, and to prefigure the fate that will await shirkers and intriguers, at the ballot-box. It is a good opportunity, and one that ought to be improved.

Two and two make four. The city o Raleigh is the Democratic capital of the Democratic State of North Carolina. Hence it is not a matter for particular astonishment that, on the one hand, it has no public school, nor on the other, that it should have just expended twenty thousand dollars on account of a few criminals. Chickens will come home to roost.

"THE Democrats of New York have done their share and more than their share in brinzing the villanies of the Tweed Ring to daylight and the villains to a dungeon."—*New York World.*

The proof thereof consisting in the fact that "the Democrats of New York" chose TWEED to the Senate and GENET to the House; the moral condition of each being exactly similar, now that they are convicted felons, to that which it was at the period of their election. Faugh!

CONCERNING the Lake Superior iron trade in 1874, the Marquette *Mining Journal* says:

The ore trade of this district will undoubtedly be cut short this season considerably below the business of this season. But railroads require repairs, and the general iron industries of the country require stock, and we have faith that the demand for ore will be far greater than is now supposed—that the product of the district will not be decreased to near that extent which some of our people now suppose.

NEGOTIATIONS are in successful progress with most of the governments of Europe and other foreign countries for an exchange of observations, and they have been completed with Russia and Turkey that on the 1st of next January the exchange of one daily report, taken simultaneously throughout the whole of the great territorial extent of the two empires mentioned and the United States, will begin. The co-operation of other nations with the system, it is thought, will not be long delayed.

THE Bourbon papers of Georgia have for some time past been squirting venom at ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS because of the occasional tributes he has incidentally paid to the administration and the Republican party, since his return to Congress. When they read the accounts of his frank admission, the other day made to a delegation of "niggers," whom he received "by appointment," that colored men, as citizens, are entitled to full protection in their civil rights without any political proscription, he will probably be treated to a very deluge of rancorous abuse.

WE NOTICE in several of the eastern papers an effort to make as light as possible the offense of GAGE the defaulting Chicago treasurer. GAGE, we are told, was a princely fellow; he *could* not, possibly, have used the money for his own purposes; the whole thing is unaccountable; and it is therefore best not to condemn him too severely. It is the prevalence of this condoning spirit that renders defalcations so frequent. The defaulters presume upon their high personal reputation, and conclude that it will develop a sympathy for them under cover of which they may escape.

IT is pleasant, and strengthens one's faith in human nature, to turn away from the sickening contemplation of the corruptions and defalcations of the time, to the study of such an exhibit as this: The records of the Treasury Department show that the custom officers of the United States collected $200,003,000 in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1873, and that not a dollar, or cent, more or less, than in other words there were no defalcations or embezzlements in the customs service. The straight-forward manner in which the recorded transactions appear reflects great credit upon the officers of customs, collectively and individually.

THE State of Michigan is wiser than her sister Commonwealths. She is pushing prison reform into the front rank. Hereafter her prisoners will be educated, and when finally discharged each man will receive a suit of clothes, ten dollars in cash, and such money as he may have earned by overwork. This is excellent. The great incentive of human action is hope: hope to better and do better in the future; hope to have the respect and honor of the community in which one dwells. This principle rests even in a convict's heart, and should be remembered, unless it is desired to make him worse than a man. Michigan will find valuable account in the step she has taken.

IT is stated on good authority that neither President GRANT nor any of his Cabinet officers will offer intoxicating beverages to New Year's callers; while the Vice President, with many Senators and Representatives and several Judges and Governors, have authorized the following expression:

"In view of the evils resulting from drinking customs widely prevalent at the holiday season, we earnestly desire that the friends of morality and good order may see fit not to include intoxicating beverages in their Christmas and New Year's hospitalities."

Wholesome example and an excellent suggestion, the first of which might be imitated, and the second observed, with marked advantage and benefit in every home in the land.

THERE has been a great deal of abuse in New York in the exercise of charity, and a movement is on foot to centralize and crystalize all charitable institutions in such a manner that it shall be impossible for imposters to live on the fat of the land by drawing stipends from perhaps six charitable institutions at the same time. A bureau of charities is to be organized, which shall keep a record of all cases where help is bestowed, so that it will be easy to ascertain whether this or that sufferer in rags is not already handsomely supported by this or that institution. Thousands of imposters live on such misdirected kindness, and if this money could be saved and applied where it would really do good, a great deal of suffering might be alleviated. The adoption of a similar plan in all large cities would probably be found of advantage.

LATE mail advices from England state that the price of coals in that country is rapidly coming down, and that the rates will probably next summer not be very much beyond the old standard. Of course this result has been helped on by another cause. The high prices have given a stimulus to coal mining. Old mines have been reopened; new shafts have been sunk; searches for coal have been pushed on in all directions. Thus, while the demand has been diminishing the supply has been increasing. Taken altogether, it may almost be inferred that the coal famine has been rather an advantage to that country than otherwise; inasmuch as there can be no question that, however a large and rapid consumption may suit coal owners who are in a hurry to realize, economy in consumption is the true rule for the nation at large.

WE CONFESS to a liking for courageous persistence in all things except evil-doing. Hence we cannot help admiring the spritly pertinacity which the disciples of the homœopathic school of medicine have exhibited in their protracted struggles to secure the recognition of their practice. The Michigan University has lately been the seat of this kind of war. Some three weeks ago a mandamus was applied for, to compel the regents of that institution to appoint two homœopathic physicians to its medical departments. The decision was, after elaborate argument by counsel on both sides of the case, rendered the day before yesterday: being to the effect that the Court had no jurisdiction in the premises. If we mistake not, several decisions of pretty nearly similar character have been previously rendered in other parts of the country.

WE see it stated that the bill introduced last winter by Mr. HOAR, of Massachusetts, providing for a commission of five members to investigate the so-called "Labor Question," is likely to be revived, and, perhaps, passed during the present session of Congress. The "labor organizations" will advocate it, as also will those self-sacrificing patriots who would like to investigate to the tune of five thousand dollars a year, with traveling expenses, and think they can get appointed as commissioners. The proposition is ill-timed. The calm, but imperative demand of the people is, that nothing which is avoidable shall be done to increase the public outlay, and that the expenditures of the government shall be reduced to the lowest possible limit consistent with the interests of the public service, and the honor and dignity of the nation. If Congress does not choose to recognize this simple fact, so much the worse for itself when the day of reckoning arrives.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

No other holiday or holy day can be justly compared with Christmas in respect to the universality as well as the vivacity of the interest with which its return is looked for and welcomed. It is, in truth, the great, pre-eminent anniversary of the Christian world, which, within the compass of its all embracing motives, in some sense comprehends and includes all other widely interesting anniversaries. The birth which the day commemorates was the beginning of Christendom, the introduction into the world of the new life which rendered its present civilization possible, and finally made it a reality. It therefore seems strange, when one thinks of it all, that there have been and may still be wise and virtuous men and women prompt to enter earnest protest against any special recognition of the day either in word or act, and who regard its observance in any form as liable to abuse and as tending chiefly to spiritual evil.

Happily to-day we need not feel much, if any, practical concern about mischiefs which in other ages flowed from this source and justified the protest, even as the recollection of them excuses now the fears of the sensitive enemies of superstition. Though superstition still too much abounds, its roots seem far from possessing their ancient vigor, even if they cannot be said to be dying, while the beautiful life divine and yet human, which Christmas commemorates, seems to be pervading the world as never before. It may be that evil, desperate wickedness in multitudinous shapes attractive or disgusting, crimes of fraud and crimes of violence, corruption sneaking or defiant in public servants, dastardly indifference on the part of wrong-doers to the misery resulting from their acts; it may be that these and such like offenses are more common now than ever before. But they simply verify the old law of antagonism expressed in the homely couplet of DANIEL DEFOE,—

"Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The Devil always builds a chapel there."

If crimes abound, good deeds unquestionably much more abound, and they can be easily and directly traced to the gradual expansion of the Christian life, to the more perfect development in modern times of the human side of the religion of CHRIST. By which expression, however, we intend no slur upon its other side. It is Christianity as it has come down the ages, the religion of CHRIST in all its essential elements, that has made Christendom what it is, the dwelling-place of arts and sciences and of political forms susceptible of peaceful modification and adaptation to the expanding needs of the human race.

It is, however, especially in the family life as developed by the Christian religion that its gracious influence is made apparent, and there is therefore peculiar propriety in observing Christmas, at least in part, as a family festival. For ages the day has been thus kept in England, even the Puritan element of the population having ceased to observe the custom for only a generation or two, and having then resumed it. To whatever extent Puritan influence in early times in this country may have succeeded in abolishing the old custom, the old custom refused to be permanently put away, and, at present we believe that nearly all American families, however humble their means, seek in one way or another to distinguish the day and render it memorable. The almost universal Dutch, German influence has contributed not a little both by literature and example to give importance and interest to our American Christmas. American Protestants are from childhood not less familiar than Germans with engravings of LUCAS CRANACH'S famous picture of MARTIN LUTHER and his family on Christmas Eve. On the table stands the Christmas tree with its burning candles, and surrounded by the group of happy children, while the illustrious Reformer, with wife CATHARINE at his side, plays on the harp. It is a touching picture and instructive withal, and not only in Germany but in foreign lands has exerted an influence favorable at once to LUTHER and to the great cause forever associated with his name. It represents a most important phase of the Reformer's character in a light which no calumnies of enemies have ever been able to darken, and which at the same time helps to sanctify that ideal of home life which is both the glory and the safety of the German people. It is perhaps safe to say that substantially the *idmen seal must*, in the long run, be the safety of the American people as well, and, therefore, any harmless and pleasing customs, which serve to attach children to their home and make them through life look back to it with happy memories, are of real, positive value. Family gatherings on Christmas day with its festivity and peculiar entertainments, may be more than they seem, exerting a most useful conservative influence not only upon individuals but upon communities and States.

METHODISM IN GERMANY.

About a score of years ago or somewhat less, the American Methodists established what is called a Mission in Germany. The enterprise appears to have met with considerable success, and at present consists, we believe, of several "stations," or centers of operation, with a theological school for the preparation of preachers. Two or three Sundays ago, a "missionary," perhaps a missionary bishop, who has spent some years in this German religious work, gave, in one of the Pittsburgh churches of his sect, an account of this mission in which "foreign" and domestic difficulties and encouragements with which it is encompassed. The narrative seems to have been decidedly offensive to at least one German who heard it, and as he has more than once given expression to his disgust through the press, it is likely to have enlisted the sympathy of many. Not having heard the discourse referred to, we are quite unable to say whether it was marked by discrimination, tact, sense and knowledge, or by the opposite qualities. From the German criticism of it, its chief offense appears to have consisted in the prevalent assumption, frankly expressed indeed, that Germany, the old land of the Reformation and the home of science and erudition, may receive religious light and social refinement from this side of the Atlantic.

We have no doubt that the critic has wholly failed to catch the point of view occupied by the speaker whom he criticises, and by the really earnest portion of the audience whom the speaker addressed. They were thinking of doctrines which, as they believe, no science or scholarship is able in its own strength to compass, and which no merely human intellect or energy is able in its own strength to impart. JOHN WESLEY, the founder of Methodism, was an accomplished scholar in his day, Fellow of an Oxford college, and at the same time so full of zeal for the propagation of the Christian faith as to undertake a mission to the Indian savages of Georgia. And, yet, according to his own account, he first learned the real import of the faith he was going to preach, from some poor German mechanics, Moravians, his fellow voyagers on the ship which was bearing him to his chosen field of labor. The afterwards made the long and difficult journey to the head-quarters of the Moravian sect in Saxony, merely to receive more perfect instruction in those great truths, as they seemed to him. Though WESLEY'S views on the subject of Moravian theology underwent some change, he was permanently influenced by its spirit, and he substantially adopted (with many additions, however), and through his long life practically carried out much of the missionary method of the sect. At a time when Germany was rightly or wrongly regarded in England as a less civilized country upon the whole, and when the so-called lower orders in England were really in a semi-barbarous condition, German Moravians and English Methodists, laboring among them for purely religious ends, were, in fact, the missionaries of civilization. Nothing is more certain, it is now generally admitted, that no other single influence did so much to elevate the English laboring classes in the eighteenth century, to teach them self-respect, self-restraint, wise foresight and economy in worldly affairs as the religious teaching and religious organization of WESLEY and his associates. And even until the present day, in despite of retrogression or degeneration in some respects, the system in England is admitted to be a powerful agency in the promotion of personal refinement and social welfare in sections of society less accessible to other influences. It is not wholly for Christian teaching, as already intimated, that these effects are claimed as results, as much of the influence of a Methodist society is, of course, the result of its rather complicated organization, by which the members are subjected to constant supervision and control—a system which seemed to Lord MACAULAY so admirably adapted to its purpose and so effectual that he declared JOHN WESLEY an administrator second only to RICHELIEU.

How well suited the system may be to Germany we do not know, but certainly there is neither presumption nor impertinence in assuming that possibly it may there produce the good results it has accomplished elsewhere.

IT is always a pleasure to give credit where credit is due. We are glad to observe that the various departments at Washington are endeavoring to meet the wishes of the Secretary of the Treasury, and help him to place the finances on a comfortable basis. This they are doing by overhauling their estimates and retrenching where retrenchment is possible. Let the axe fall liberally; and let the press, also, continue to insist that the estimates shall come down. It is affirmed, by persons who have been longest and most thoroughly acquainted with the details of the annual estimates, and who understand the needs of the Treasury, that the expenditures for the remainder of this year, and the estimates for the next, can be so reduced that no necessity whatever will exist for inflating the currency or increasing taxation to the amount of a dollar. Let it be done; for if the tax-gatherer shall be sent on any new errands to the homes of the people, unless the necessity is absolutely unavoidable, the voice of indignant protest and remonstrance will be heard like thunder throughout the whole land.

LESSON STILL TO LEARN.

In the movements of laborers out of work, which threaten the peace and order of several American cities, one of the greatest difficulties with which European governments have to contend, is brought vividly home to the American people. In consideration of the resources of the country in comparison with the extent of destitution, we cannot regard the peril as great. At least for the present, our ordinary police will doubtless suffice to prevent anarchy. It is, however, impossible not to think of the future with some misgivings, in the presence of such demonstrations as the laborers have made in New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati and Chicago. In all these cases the workmen meet conspicuously in the meetings and directing the proceedings, have been foreigners of recent immigration. In their formal speeches and resolutions, as well as in their street cries, they show that they are thoroughly imbued with notions and theories which could hardly have been either formed or very long entertained by industrious American citizens. Evidently their ideas of the functions of government must have been derived from experience of the paternal system. They demand that the government shall furnish them with work, or at any rate with food, and the plea of some of them is that, as they helped and saved the government in its time of need, one good turn deserves another. Of course, men who thus reason have as yet caught no glimpse of the truth, that the American government is a mere representative of the people, a servant having neither property nor power underived from the people. They think still of the government as they thought of it in their old home, as a high and mighty personage invested with all authority and boundless wealth, in its own right, and as therefore having incurred great and imperative obligations towards those who at any time have rendered it a service. These poor men have still to learn, at least to realize, that in saving the American government from destruction, they were merely saving themselves and maintaining their own right to labor and enjoy the fruits of their labor. They have still to realize the blessedness of living under a free instead of a paternal government. Indeed they may never learn the lesson, but their children, we may trust, will learn it. Certainly, unless they do, there will be a poor chance for either government or property, fifty or a hundred years hence.

THE VIRGINIUS.

The legal opinion of the Attorney General, that the Virginius was not an American vessel, and was flying the American flag in violation of our laws, destroys all the beautiful rhetoric to which we have been treated about the flag, its sacredness, and the necessity for flying to arms to vindicate it. The great wrong to our flag was committed by the Virginius itself, in attempting to carry on a piratical trade under its protection; and the national concern for it should have been directed against those who perjured their souls to gain the chance of desecrating it.

While, however, the Attorney General is clear on this point, he is equally clear that the Spanish had no right to overhaul and capture the Virginius in the open sea. The offense against our law committed by the buccaneers on board of her, was one to be dealt with by the United States alone. Spain has no mission to enforce our laws, or to set herself up as a judge of their violation. The capture of the Virginius, therefore by a Spanish war vessel, in the open sea, was as much an interference with our national rights as it the vessel had rightfully carried our flag. Spain, consequently, has no right to demand the restoration of the Virginius as a result of this adjudication against the nationality of that vessel. Having had no right to capture her, originally, she has no right to demand her restoration.

The decision of the Attorney General tells as much, in this view, against Spain as against the Cuban sympathizers; but its main importance consists in its impartiality and candid fairness. That, in an international case of this magnitude, the chief law officer of the nation should apparently rule the main legal question against the government, must excite as much surprise abroad, as admiration; and the coolness and firmness which has saved the nation from the cost and disgrace of a bloody war, into which at one time we seemed to be plunging headlong, on account of the capture of this vessel, cannot be too much commended or too highly prized.

CITY CONTROLLER.

The Councils will meet, this afternoon, to choose a Controller, to fill the place made vacant by the resignation of Mr. MCGOWAN; and no weightier duty ever fell upon the members of that body than the one they will have to discharge in making that selection. The Controller is the balance-wheel in the financial machinery of the city; and in the utmost importance to the city that the man chosen should be one whose name will carry confidence to the hearts of the tax-payers. We name no names, and we urge no one above another; but we desire to impress upon the minds of Councilmen that the occasion requires of them care, discrimination and a close attention to the qualifications of the various candidates. The Controller should be a good accountant, to begin with; but not *merely* an accountant. The office requires a man of strong will and unyielding firmness, as well as a large acquaintance with the interests of the city. The capacity to say "No!" at the right time and in the right way is, in such a place, absolutely indispensable.

THE Supreme Court of the United States has just rendered an important decision in relation to attempted set-offs in bankrupt insurance companies. The case was this: A certain firm in St. Paul, Minnesota, became embarrassed and unable to pay their debts. One of the banks sued them on a note previously given, took a judgment by default, procured an execution, and levied on their stock of goods. At the time the action was brought both the bank and the debtors knew they were insolvent, and had committed an act of bankruptcy. After the judgment and levy another creditor commenced proceedings in bankruptcy against the same debtors, and they were adjudged bankrupts before the same, and the assignee claimed the goods thus levied upon, insisting that the action in allowing judgment to go against them by default, were guilty of a fraud on the bank as creditor. On these facts the following questions arose, on which the court divided, and they were certified to the Supreme Court for answer: first, whether or not an intent on the firm to suffer their property to be taken on execution, with intent to give a preference to the bank, or with intent to defeat or delay the operation of the bankrupt act, can be inferred from the facts stated? second, whether, under the facts, the bank under their proceedings had reasonable cause to believe that a fraud on the bankrupt act was intended by the firm? And third, whether, under the circumstances, the bank obtains by the levy and execution a valid lien on the goods as against the assignee in bankruptcy? The Supreme Court hold, in effect, that a *bona fide* judgment obtained outside of bankruptcy proceedings, even though the defendant is insolvent, is a good lien in bankruptcy proceedings commenced subsequently. This decision largely overrules or qualifies the decisions of most of the United States District Judges, and is, for that reason, of all the greater moment.

CHICAGO has many ways and practices which we detest—as, for instance, her hot corn in the elevators, her bogus warehouse receipts, her doctored barley and her treasury defalcations. Still, we cannot help admiring her tireless energy and push. There is, perhaps, no stronger evidence of the solid prosperity of her commercial interests than the rapid increase of her facilities for freight transportation. The network of railroads, which, like a web, stretches out over the whole land in every direction, catching in its meshes the trade of the Northwest at Chicago, grows more intricate every year. We now observe that another important railroad enterprise has just been inaugurated, by which that city is to receive the benefit of a closer connection with the Eastern markets, in the establishment of two new fast freight lines, to be run over the nearly completed air line, which is expected to shorten the time on through freights some six hours to New York. The road has been built with a special view to running fast freight trains, the grades being lower than on any other Eastern line, enabling them to run a great number of loaded cars on each train, and thereby decreasing the cost of transportation, besides insuring greater speed. It is proposed to run these two fast freight trains over this route. If the progress of Chicago were only a little less in a merely materialistic and horizontal direction—if it gave a little better evidence of possessing an *upward* as well as an *onward* tendency—what a wonderful city it would, in process of time, become!

THE people of Chicago, since learning the details of the "GAGE" defalcation, are not enamored of "Citizens'" tickets, in municipal affairs. *The Inter-Ocean* says:

We call the attention of the people to the fact that Chicago has for a long time possessed a city government; that it has been alternately under the control of the Democratic and Republican parties, and that neither under Democratic nor Republican rule has the city suffered from any considerable defalcations. It was reserved for a "citizens' movement," condemning all party nominations, to plunge the city into disgrace, and to land it on the very verge of financial dishonor. It will be remembered that in 1869, when Mr. Gage received his first nomination, his opponents were denounced as bummers, barnacles, dead-beats and scalawags. They were characterized as hungry for spoils, thirsting after contracts, jobs, and official peculations generally. All the English papers published in the city, except the *Evening Post*, joined in the hunt, but the outgoing city treasurer then paid over every dollar of the city money to Mr Gage, and the "bummers, barnacles and scalawags" of the Republican party went out of power with a clean bill of health.

THE escape of GENET, the convicted Democratic member of Assembly in New York, and the failure of all the other ring thieves to come forward when called for trial, are proofs that the plunderers give up all further hope of resisting the law, and have concluded that the safest way for themselves is to keep out of reach. They confess their guilt by thus absconding, but that was already too plain to be longer denied.

Mayor HALL, it is true, still stands his ground, and will go to trial; but this may be mere bravado. If he can clear his skirts of guilt, however, he is right in facing the matter boldly.

The Democratic Sheriff of New York, who deliberately permitted GENET to escape from his hands until, doubtless, he made to suffer severely for his act. The judge who tried GENET is not a man to be trifled with by such a creature as Sheriff BRENNAN, as that officer will soon learn to his cost.

Compressed Air as a Motive Power.

A Boston engineer advocates the introduction of compressed air as a motive power in that city, and especially in that portion of it which is now being rebuilt, so far as may be consistent with its present advanced state of reconstruction. The idea is a good one.

The plan proposed is to select a location where the air is pure, and there erect engines and compressors commensurate with the amount of work to be done. These should be in a perfect fire-proof building, separated from each other, two at least to be provided, in order to facilitate repairs and avoid the inconvenience attending an accident to a single engine. Both engines could generally be used, so as to avoid the expense of an idle one—the engines to be kept alive nights and Sundays, with furnace fires at low heat, if the power be made auxiliary to the fire department.

In the practical carrying out of this principle, it is proposed that there be laid in the streets cast-iron pipes, like water pipes, and of about the same strength, branching from the mains by reduced sizes into all the streets where necessary, and furnished with service pipes and buildings requiring the power from these service pipes it will be easy to connect with the engines in the cellars or attics. There should also be a perpetually self-registering pressure gauge at the office in connection with the compressors, so that the pressure of air at every hour, day and night, shall be recorded for reference. The quantity of air consumed can be measured by meters, as is that of water and gas; though in place of this, the better and cheaper plan might be resorted to, of measuring the power by the engines themselves, by keeping a locked-up clock-work connection with each engine, which shall record the number of its revolutions, and the power consumed being the product of the quantity into the pressure.

Soldiers' Orphan School at Dayton, Armstrong County, Partially Destroyed.

The *Kittanning Republican* says:—We regret to learn that the greater portion of the Soldiers' Orphan School building at Dayton, this county, was destroyed by fire on Friday morning last. The fire occurred before daylight, and the great difficulty in arousing the children out of the burning building, but fortunately all escaped unharmed. The building was fully insured, but great inconvenience will be found in getting the children comfortably fixed for the winter. This establishment belonged to a company which had a contract with the State to care for the orphans. The Rev. Mr. Brown, late chaplain of the 78th, Prof. Hugh McCandless had charge of the institution, and he, together with the gentlemen composing the company, will do all in their power to care for the children comfortable. How the fire originated is not yet known.

The citizens of Dayton promptly volunteered to take charge of the children until they can be provided for. Many of them will be furloughed home until provision is made for their accommodation; the remainder will be well taken care of. The buildings were three in number, and located some distance apart. The main building, in the centre, was used as a school room, dining room and kitchen. The other two were used by the orphans as fire originated in the kitchen, destroying the main building, with the books, desks and all the provisions in the cellar, and extended to the building occupied by the boys, which was also destroyed. That occupied by the girls was saved with difficulty.

Woodward Turns State's Evidence—He is to Testify Against Mayor Hall.

E. A. Woodward, County Auditor when the Ring raid was consummated, has consented to State's evidence. He has already returned to this city and given himself up to the authorities, and is now in the custody of one of the police captains. The District Attorney and his assistants, while admitting that Woodward is in the city, refuse to disclose his whereabouts. Negotiations between Woodward and Attorney General Barlow have been in progress for months past. It is asserted that Woodward has been promised immunity from punishment on condition of his giving testimony in all the Ring cases which yet remain to be tried. He will be used as a witness during the trial of ex-Mayor Hall, which will begin on the 20th inst. It is stated that Attorney General Barlow intended to surprise the defense by suddenly producing Woodward as a witness. It is asserted on trustworthy authority that Woodward is prepared to furnish all the missing links in the chain of testimony against the persons accused of fraud; and that his confession will be especially valuable as giving information regarding the division of the plunder. It is further alleged that he will implicate some persons against whom no proof of crime has heretofore been developed, including two or three persons now holding high office.—*N. Y. Times.*

The Trial of Bishop Cummins.

Bishop Smith, of Kentucky, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, has selected the board of inquiry into the charges preferred against Bishop Cummins. The place of meeting is required to be in Kentucky, at such time and place as designated by Bishop Smith. The choice of the board was determined by lot. The following are the members:

Kentucky—Clerical: The Rev. James Craik, D. D., and the Rev. William H. Platt. Lay: Messrs. William Cornwall and Samuel B. Churchill.

Ohio—Clerical: The Rev. John Ufford, D. D., and the Rev. James Lewis Burton, D. D. Lay: Messrs. John W. Andrews and Augustus H. Moss.

Indiana—Clerical: The Rev. Benjamin Franklin, D. D., and the Rev. George J. Magill. Lay: Messrs. John S. Irwin, M. D., and William H. Morrison.

Tennessee—Clerical: The Rev. John A. Harrison, D. D., and the Rev. James Carmichael. Lay: Messrs. George R. Fairbanks and John F. Jett.

A WRITER in a late number of *All the Year Round* has discovered that the seeming nonsense choruses of many old English ballads are in reality the remnants of the songs sung by the ancient Britons in the celebration of their sun-worship. He says:

"Fal, la, la" is written by Welsh, "fal la," fal meaning a circle or sun, and la a day, and both words expressing the completion of a day. As the Druids marched round their stone circles, like those still discernible at Stonehenge and on the Sussex Downs, they chanted their meaningful chorus, "Fal-a-fal-la," as the grey worshipful sun sank behind the western hills. So "Down, down, derry down," in the original is "Dun, dun, deragon dun," and it means "To the hill, to the oaks, to the hill," and the Druids marched to worship. The old Puritan poet, George Withers, used another of these Druidical choruses in one of his pleasant ditties:

There was a lass, a fair one,
As fair as e'er was seen,
She was, indeed, a rare one,
Another Sheba Queen;
But fool, as then I was,
I thought she loved me true,
But now, alas! she's left me,
Fal, lero, lero, loo!

The original of this refrain was "Fal, lear, luadh dh," and it hailed the sun rising above the sea. "Tooral, looral," "Highdrololio," and many other of these apparently meaningless burdens to old songs, have a similar curious origin.

MRS. BURNHAM writes to the St. Louis *Republican* an account of her voyage in the Ville du Havre last summer. She says the ship was old and worn out, and was formerly the Napoleon III. She then predicted that it wouldn't be above water in 1874. She says:

"I scuttled the ship in half a dozen places with hairpins and paper cutters. I tell the unexpurgated truth when I say that, lying on the sofa in stateroom No. 50, I dug into the punky wood, two or three inches away from the port hole, with a paper knife till I struck the ghastly iron of the outer coat. That iron plating was nowhere thicker than a frying-pan, and a determined little pilot-boat with a single nail at the prow could have cut through us and gone at the other side, if it didn't run into the cook or captain *en route*. When the Loch Earn gets into port, people will rush down to see the formidable agent of destruction. She will possess no such importance to me. I know how easy she did it, for I know what a crazy old shell the Ville du Havre was."

The Democratic Coroner of Brooklyn has been speculating in bogus cases of small-pox.

GENERAL AND PARTICULAR.

Some say, that ever, 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth we celebrate,
The birds of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit stirs abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

This is the time in which to remember that the little child in the manger, weak and poor, has shown more power in this world than all the heroes, the conquerors, the poets and those who seem to be miraculous. He overtops them all.

When Emerson said that the gift should be a part of the giver, did he have Christmas in his mind? At least he expresses what every one who has given truly or received gratefully feels.

The distinguishing characteristic of Agassiz was that he found harmony and order in a pebble, in the fin of a fish, in sea-stars, and the tiniest creatures that live in the depths or run and fly in the sun, not less than in the vast sequences of our geological strata, and the multitudinous kinships in whole families, tribes and races of living things.

Photography is to be taught in the Boston Girls' High School. Teaching sewing and cooking would perhaps be better.

Oakey Hall's social status, as well as his mental qualities, were much higher than those of Tweed and his ring confederates, and if judgment should overtake him, also, in his present trial, the fact will create a far wider and deeper impression than any that has preceded it.

John Hay has written some virile verses in this time, but his poem on Isabella and Eugene, in the January *Scribner*, is mere civilized drivel.

Genet having filched what money he could from the State and city of New York, ended by stealing himself.

This is a good season in which to cultivate the art of conversation in families. This would tend to develop attachment to the home, which is sadly wanting in many households, besides promoting the education of children.

One of the oldest and largest medical societies in the United States, that of the county of New York, which embraces the leading physicians of the city, has taken a commendable step in recognizing women doctors who have graduated in regular schools.

The Commissioner of Agriculture publishes a notice requesting people not to send money for the annual reports of his department for 1872 and 1873, as their publication has not been authorized, and they will not be for sale when they are published, but will be distributed like other public documents.

It is proposed to add one hour a day—they are now six—to the office time at Washington, and thus greatly reduce the force of clerks and so save expenses.

Woman suffrage is declining in England. The Liberal party originally supported the movement; but it is found that, so far, the women who have voted on the basis of property qualifications, develop into full grown Tories as surely as the polly wog becomes a frog.

There are now no less than three histories of Illinois, in various stages of preparation, by eminent citizens of that State.

The New York papers are sounding the alarm at the dangers which threaten the harbor of that city, and showing by professional evidence that prompt remedial action is necessary if the port expects to retain her commercial eminence.

The shipment of oysters from Long Island to the London market has been undertaken. A newly formed company made their first consignment during the past week.

There is no other State in the Union, having the population and territory of Pennsylvania, that has so small a debt.

The "intelligent contraband" and "the reliable gentleman" of war times have a successor just now in "the experienced banker," who is loaded to the muzzle with schemes for the relief of our financial ills.

The latest proposition is that two cent postal cards shall be issued, on which the receiver of a message may send a reply without cost to himself.

The Democratic State Committee of Maine are preparing for the regular yearly defeat of the party. They will hold their annual session on Thursday, January 8.

The despicable leaven of caste is yet working against the rights of the colored race. A black man was the other day taken to a Brooklyn hospital in a dying condition, and there refused admittance by the officer in charge, on the ground of color.

There has been a terrible mishap in the household of the Bourbon Governor-elect of Ohio. A negro coachman in his employ has eloped with one of the white maid-servants, and married her.

There is every prospect that nearly the entire amount of the loan of 1858 will be exchanged for new five per cents.

Virginia is making some contributions to literature. Fiber, for paper-making, is now manufactured in quantity from the cane or reeds which grow so abundantly in the Dismal Swamp.

A company is organizing in London for the purpose of purchasing large tracts of land in the mineral region of West Virginia. They propose to sell farms, clear off timber, and work mines, of coal, iron and other minerals.

The German empire, Belgium, Ecuador, Mexico and Hayti have formally accepted invitations to participate in the Centennial Exposition. Little Ecuador is the only one that ever it that the government has already made the necessary appropriation.

Having got out of the Virginius scrape at the risk of war and the cost of five millions, the next thing to do manifestly is to clap our claw on the whole fleet of filibusters.

Plymouth Church is fiercely loyal to its masters, and malcontents, no matter how influential in the past, are being retired as rapidly as possible to back seats.

The Howard Association of Memphis has struck a balance sheet, and finds itself the possessor of $35,000, which it has decided to hold in reserve for future emergencies.

Governor Campbell, of Wyoming Territory, is satisfied with woman suffrage, and strongly indorses it in his message.

Bless the little children! How many thousands of pairs of young eyes will, this morning, open very wide with astonishment and admiration at the treasures which good St. Nicholas provides.

Remember that He whose birthday is commemorated by the Christian world to-day, said: "It is more blessed to give than receive."

Tusser sang three centuries ago of Christmas, that it "Comes but once a year," but the coming has been worth looking for.

What duty more appropriate than, for those who are able, to make to-day a merry Christmas in the homes of the poor? They, if any, have cause to rejoice that the star of Bethlehem shone over the world.

To-day remember the widow's mite. It was more than all the rest had given, because it was the measure of greater love.

Never was the advent of the civilized world's greatest feast day more welcome than now—sending out great volumes of smoke. There was, a few years since, such a fire in a cave near Lake Tahoe, another in a large cave in the Humboldt country, and we have heard of them in other places. The gummy substance found in these caves might be passed off on a 'pilgrim' for lava."

After the Battle.

A couple of provincial partisans, aware that their constituencies see them from afar, call each other hard names on the floor of the House, and a few minutes afterward greet each other in the restaurant below, over an oyster stew or a whisky cocktail, with the significant wink and smile which show that these two understand each other if the public do not. The amenities of the restaurant do not entirely wipe out the traces of political feud, real or pretended, and the galleries are put upon. Machiavel held that it was amusing to deceive the people, and these buncombe orators doubtless share his opinion. To confront each other on the floor like two relentless gladiators, and then adjourn below to clink glasses like a pair of Tenier's tavern bummers, furnishes a pleasure something akin to eating stolen fruit—*From "Speech-making in Congress," by Albert Rhodes, Scribner's for January.*

Protestant International Sympathy.

"Earl Russel," says the *Rock*, "has consented to preside at a great Protestant meeting, with the object of expressing to the German Emperor and the German people the sympathy that Englishmen feel for them in the arduous struggle with Ultramontanism on which they are now embarked. The meeting will be held in St. James' Hall, on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 27th of January, when the noble Earl will be well supported by members of either House of Parliament, as well as representatives of different religious denominations. One "Old Catholic" will be among the speakers, and it is hoped the Archbishop of York will be willing to move a resolution. We may add that it is proposed that each of the great towns should send at least two representatives to the meeting, and in this way we hope that its character may be made truly national."

MAN'S ingenuity in devising schemes to make money is marvelous. We have just heard of the "life fillers." It seems that there are a dozen or two persons in New York city who save all the papers that come into their possession. During January they make frequent visits to the book binderies and offer to supply any papers necessary to complete files. The binders receive during that month hundreds of periodicals to bind and in many cases some numbers are missing. The "file fillers" then are in demand, and they sell their wares at an advance of over 1,000 per cent. on cost.

PERSONAL.

An admirable equestrian painting of the President, life size, has just been completed in New Orleans, by a noted artist named Piersn. It has a frame of solid cypress, and is designed as a Christmas present to General Grant.

Miss Ella M. Hulett, for some time an Attorney of the Illinois State courts, was, the other day, at Chicago, admitted to practice in the United States and District Courts—being, we think, the first instance of the kind.

It is a curious fact to reflect on that to-day the most popular Christmas story writer in England is a Jew. That Mr. Farjeon has contrived by sheer force of talent to acquire his present proud position, and that his stories sink deeply into the popular heart from their winning grace, kindly sentiment and freedom from cant—his indicates how prejudice is dissipated by knowledge. The prejudice, perhaps, has been on both sides.

Agassiz was twice married. He has three children, Alexander Agassiz, Ida (Mrs. Higginson), and Pauline (Mrs. Shaw). He died on the seventh anniversary of the death of Washington, and almost at the same hour of the day.

Premier Gladstone and Herbert Spencer have been tilting. Herbert says that Gladstone has made himself the "champion (or exponent) of anti-scientific views," referring most particularly to the theory of evolution. The latter replies that he has "no repugnance to any conclusions whatever legitimately arising upon well ascertained facts or well tested reasonings," but only complains that the speculations of the Almighty are denied upon grounds which appear to him utterly and manifestly insufficient to warrant such denial.

The position of Professor of the *classe de perfectionnement* in the violin section of the Brussels Conservatory of Music has just been tendered to M. Wieniawski, who is at present in this country. The office is the highest of its order in Europe, for there is no doubt that the Brussels Conservatory has quite outstripped its French rival, and that the traditions of the violinist's art, especially, have been more faithfully preserved and more skillfully transmitted to its pupils than by any other institution of the kind. It is not surprising, therefore, that M. Wieniawski should have decided upon accepting it. He will sail for Europe in the spring.

The *Intendencia* of Valparaiso invites all Chileans and foreigners residing in the Republic to get up a subscription for the purpose of erecting a statue of bronze to William Wheelwright, an American, the first projector of navigation by steam in the Pacific.

Washington has a newsboy thirteen years old, who bought his mother a sewing machine, for which

A FAMINE IN BENGAL.

Half of the Supply of Food Exhausted.

A Frightful Prospect for Thirty Millions of People—Proposed Measures of Relief—One Hundred Millions Wanted.

CALCUTTA, December 20.—One-half of the supply of food in the province of Bengal has been exhausted, and it is now believed that a famine cannot be averted. Thus far there has been no actual distress among the people.

A FRIGHTFUL PROSPECT.
[Correspondence of the London Times.]

CALCUTTA, October 31.—I am afraid we are about to endure a famine in Bengal such a has never before been experienced in the history of our rule. The rains ceased prematurely in the middle of last month, just as they did in Orissa in 1865, while the previous fall had been unprecedentedly light. The result is that the great Aman rice crop, on which the people depend for the main, has failed almost all over Bengal, and nothing like an average eight-anna crop will, I fear, be harvested. But this is not all. The drought has utterly prevented the sowing of the spring crop, and we have to face twelve months during which the people will have to be maintained out of the food reserves in the country plus this miserable failure of the Aman. The drought was felt over a very small area of the country in 1866, while this year it has marked the whole country from the Bay of Bengal right up to the borders of Oude. I believe I was the first to wake up to the real significance of the weather reports, but all are now equally alarmed alike. The worst tract in the country is the one that is most densely populated and the poorest of them all, Behar, with nearly 30,000,000 people to be fed. Owing to our miserable *laissez faire* notions in the past, we have left the zemindar and the cultivator to reduce this people to positive slavery. The zemindar and his *amlah* (underlings) take ten-sixteenth of the ryot's crops —imagine that!—and the usurer steps in and takes the other six-sixteenths, and the people live upon the advances of the latter from one year's end to the other. Growing the most magnificent harvests of wheat, rice, opium, indigo, they themselves exist more on the coarsest millets, and are as poor and miserable as can be conceived. In these circumstances I have urged privately, but with all the force I could command, that only combined action can save us from a very awful calamity, viz., the empowering the ryot to take the crops now in the field and the cold weather crops, suspending all claims against him for rents, cesses, revenue, &c., for twelve months. If the customary misappropriation of these crops between zemindar and usurer takes place this year, nothing will save the people from perishing by millions. They have all been nursing the hope that rain might yet fall, out I have always considered it hopeless, and a few of many years past that there is no reasonable hope of any, and the position at last begins to dawn upon them all. Campbell is at Patna; the Viceroy is in the west; my doors are in Calcutta, and all that can be done no doubt will be.

THE PROBLEM OF RELIEF.

A London correspondent, under date of the 4th, finds four points involved in the problem of relief: first, the quantity of food it will be necessary to import from without into the distressed districts; second, where this is to come from; third, the possibility of collecting and conveying it to central points within the famine area in sufficient time; fourth, the probable expense. It appears that on the most favorable supposition 1,000,000 tons must be imported for a population of 11,000,000 or 12,000,000, and that these numbers will have to be fed with such supplies for at least nine months. At one quarter per head per day, which is the least that the Orissa Famine Commission (of which Sir G. Campbell was the chief), consider sufficient, this population would require for nine months 1,400,000 tons, which at £14 per ton (and it is more than doubtful whether rice can be laid down within reach of all at that rate), would cost the country about £19,000,000. How much of this will be provided by private speculation or benevolence; whether the government can, or will, bring such a pressure upon the zemindars, to whom the permanent settlement has so recklessly sacrificed by far the greater part of the profits of the land for nearly a century past, as will compel them to disgorge a fair portion of their wealth for the relief of their starving tenantry, is quite uncertain. Those who know what has actually come to light in the last two years in regard to the Orissa famine are inclined to believe that in the terrible famine of 1866, these men, with few exceptions, actually exacted full rents from their starving tenants, though the whole of their own rents were remitted by the government, will put little faith in the Association's talk about "private benevolence." We may safely assume that the government will have to meet at least half the expense, and that they should now be purchasing grain to the amount of £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 sterling. It is useless and worse to rely for certainty upon this point. Some estimate must be made, and that forthwith, and the government must act upon it without delay. Secondly, where are 1,400,000 tons of food to be got from? India, I believe, can supply the whole. The exports in ordinary years are about 1,000,000 tons, and surely the balance can be obtained from the population of 240,000,000 provided with good crops? But if so the government must at once lay its hand upon the available surplus whether by prohibiting exports, or by offering to intending exporters better prices than they can get in foreign markets, or, if necessary, by collecting rents in kind, an expedient which is quite open to them. Without this there will be failure, private enterprise, to whatever extent it may be called into play, will certainly not act quickly enough for the emergency. Thirdly, as to the practicability of carrying such quantities of grain from the east, west, and south to the distressed districts, I entertain no doubt. I have been at the pains to make inquiries from the traffic managers of the two great railway companies in this country, and believe that it would be perfectly practicable to convey the whole quantity required from Calcutta alone by the East Indian line. Then there are besides the Punjab and Jubbulpore lines, both single, indeed, and not capable of transporting any very large quantity. There is also the vast boat traffic of the Ganges, amounting according to the last census, to 60,000 boats of all classes. Our means of transport are, therefore, sufficient. Lastly, as to the probable expense. It must be great; it must be a matter of millions. Let the government make up their minds to this at once; let there be no dallying, no delaying in hopes of rain, supposed concealed stocks (that rock on which the Bengal government made shipwreck in Orissa in 1866,) private enterprise, etc. Let the government go in at once boldly for the purchase and transport to the scene of 1,000,000 tons of food, assured that everything will be forgiven but failure.

A COLUMN OF FLAME.

A Singular Phenomenon in Nevada—A Column of Phosphorescent Light Sixty Feet High—Awe-Stricken Miners.

The *Enterprise*, of Virginia City, Nevada, under date of December 5th, prints the following: "About one o'clock yesterday morning some of the residents of the western part of this city were startled by observing what seemed a column of flame fifty or sixty feet in height shooting up out of a shaft near the old Ophir Works. It was at first thought that the old timbers of the mine were on fire, and three or four men ran to the spot to see what could be done toward smothering the flames. On reaching the shaft, however, they found that there was no smell of smoke, and also that the supposed fire was a light unlike anything they had ever before seen, and its weird whiteness and the strange corusecations of its component particles. In the light the faces of the men wore a look of corpse-like pallor. Two of the three or four present were miners returning from work with dinner pails in their hands, and it was observed that the pails (tin) appeared of a brilliant steel-blue color. Their clothing and hair also partook in some degree of the same ghastly and unnatural color. The light came up the full size of the large square shaft, and seen at a distance as it rose up through the falling snow, closely resembled one of the shooting spires seen in the aurora borealis, and it seems to have something of the same weird and inconsistent motion. Although the men felt creeping over them a sort of superstitious awe, they still had sufficient courage to approach the shaft and gaze into it. A strange sight was then seen. The whole interior of the shaft seemed to be at a white heat, and glowed like a furnace. The timbers on the sides were particularly brilliant, and each splinter, excrescence or bit of fungus, seemed darting dazzling rays that streamed steadily out in all directions. A warm, steamy current of air steadily ascended from the yawning regions below, and there was observed a sickening, mushy smell. All those who looked into the shaft afterward felt a severe pain in the temples, and two or three were made sick at the stomach. This singular appearance lasted for nearly half a hour after it was first observed, and before it was all over eight or ten men, mostly miners reporting from their work at various mines (it being about the time of changing shifts), had collected about the shaft. The light died out from the top downward, and protuberances from the sides of the shaft continued to glow for some minutes after the light was no longer visible above the top of the shaft. The light would seem to have been caused by the belching forth—of some kind of highly phosphurated gas from some of the deep underground chambers in the old abandoned works. The rush of gas—for gas of some kind it must have been—was probably caused by an extensive cave in some place where the old timbers had rotted away. One of the men who had the good fortune to witness the strange phenomenon, is of the opinion that the mixing or mingling of the gas from the mine with the atmospheric air had something to do with intensifying the light. He observed that *the ascending current of pseudo flame* myriads of small particles of some small substance, globules of vapor, or something of the kind which appeared to flash and scintillate as they darted upward, and which presented in the general column of light much the same appearance as motes moving about in a sunbeam. The light was observed by a few persons on B street, and was supposed by them to be a stream of light thrown up into the air, and reflected from the falling snow by some large reflecting lantern. Here, now at least, is a nut of large size for our scientists to crack.

It is a curious fact that while AGASSIZ, the profoundest scientist of the age, should maintain in the January *Atlantic*, that all the observed data prove the permanency of types, and that the evolution theory is, in short, an ingenious work of the imagination, the *Popular Science Monthly* of the same date should contain an article by a clergyman in defense of the evolution theory, and attributing its non-acceptance among his brother clergymen to "an unfortunate but very general want of scientific training."

GRIER HEARD FROM.

The Nation Bank and Its Accounts.

The Receiver Gets a Statement from the Missing Cashier—His Whereabouts Still a Mystery.

It was rumored yesterday that John H. Bailey, Esq., receiver of the defunct Nation Trust Company, had received a communication from the missing cashier, Robert J. Grier. All sorts of reports were in circulation regarding the matter, and, of course, Mr. Bailey was interviewed on the subject. Mr. Bailey at once admitted that he has received a statement in Grier's handwriting, but "that there is no clue with it as to where the "wanted" man is. The purport of the paper is to give information regarding certain accounts that are in a state of confusion on the books of the bank. Beyond this, nothing further can be gleaned. Mr. Bailey says that the statement presents few features not previously known, and these only refer, as we have said, to the books of the institution. As to how the receiver was put in possession of this statement, Mr. B. does not state.

Mr. Bailey was interrogated as to when he expected to make his report to court, touching the condition of the bank and the result of his examination. He informed us that when he took charge of the bank, his first care was to call in the pass books of the small depositors, prepare them with the bank accounts, and return them to the anxious inquirers, with an explanatory statement. He added that no more than ordinary routine business was transacted by the bank while engaged in examining the larger accounts, which involved more perplexity, and he did not expect to complete his investigation for over a month yet. As near as he could estimate he would not be prepared to report before court before the first of February, because he had determined to make a most exhaustive examination, and to draw up his report in as complete and satisfactory manner as he found it possible. He further states that he found the books of the bank kept in a very confused state.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

The Official Vote in Allegheny County—Vote for, 18:002; Against, 1,935—Majority for, 16,167.

The Return Judges of Elections met in one of the jury rooms Friday, for the purpose of receiving and making an official count of the votes cast for and against the new Constitution at the election on Tuesday. Mr. Col. Porter was elected President of the Board, and Messrs. John A. Sargent, J. G. McFarland and James James Alexander, Clerks. The official figures thus far received are given below. From the figures given, it appears that the majority in the county for the instrument is 16,167. There are two districts yet to be heard from—the second precinct of the Third ward, Allegheny, and the first precinct of South Versailles. The vote of the Seventh ward, Pittsburgh, was thrown out, as illegal. Following are the figures:

DISTRICTS.	For	Ag'st.	Maj.	Maj.
			For.	Ag'st.
PITTSBURGH.				
1st ward	277	67	217	....
2d ward	338	59	279	....
3d ward	196	31	165	....
4th ward	329	45	284	....
5th ward	329	22	307	....
6th ward	472	66	406	....
7th ward	Thrown out.			
8th ward	420	25	395	....
9th ward	305	69	245	....
10th ward	206	97	109	....
11th ward	367	16	351	....
12th ward, 1st p	338	26	312	....
12th ward, 2d p	178	11	167	....
13th ward, 1st p	201	9	192	....
13th ward, 2d p	59	5	54	....
14th ward	357	97	260	....
15th ward	308	32	276	....
16th ward, 1st p	138	72	66	....
16th ward, 2d p	153	9	144	....
17th ward, 1st p	276	28	248	....
17th ward, 2d p	264	22	242	....
18th ward	72	9	63	....
19th ward	209	13	196	....
20th ward	197	12	185	....
21st ward, 1st p	241	223	18	....
21st ward, 2d p	3	4	....	1
22d ward, 1st p	84	12	72	....
22d ward, 2d p	36	4	32	....
23d ward	133	13	120	....
24th ward	60	145	....	85
25th ward	339	50	289	....
26th ward	496	57	439	....
27th ward	147	32	115	....
28th ward	342	14	328	....
29th ward	302	20	282	....
30th ward	184	47	137	....
31st ward	33	53	....	20
32d ward	156	9	147	....
33d ward	70	4	66	....
34th ward	109	4	105	....
35th ward	62	16	46	....
36th ward	112	12	100	....
ALLEGHENY.				
1st ward	496	13	483	....
2d ward	520	17	503	....
3d ward, 1st p	484	19	465	....
3d ward, 2d p	No return.			
4th ward, 1st p	476	29	447	....
4th ward, 2d p	209	9	200	....
5th ward	446	19	427	....
6th ward	576	8	568	....
7th ward	441	14	427	....
8th ward	149	4	145	....
9th ward	106	10	96	....
10th ward	151	5	46	....
11th ward	92	11	81	....
BOROUGHS.				
Braddocks	168	13	95	....
Elizabeth	110	3	107	....
Newickley	164	22	142	....
Sharpsburg	142	27	115	....
West Elizabeth	69	6	39	....
Tarentum	126	6	120	....
Millvale	97	0	97	....
Etna	72	3	69	....
Bellevue	42	10	32	....
Manchester	54	9	45	....
Mansfield	58	3	55	....
Verona	34	7	27	....
TOWNSHIPS.				
Kilbuck, 1st p	69	12	57	....
Kilbuck, 2d p	53	4	49	....
Leet	154	13	141	....
Pine	93	9	84	....
Penn	97	2	95	....
Elizabeth, 1st precinct	56	2	54	....
Elizabeth, 2d p	39	17	22	....
Elizabeth, 3d p	23	3	20	....
Elizabeth, 4th p	33	18	15	....
Mifflin	175	2	173	....
Solomon, 1st p	140	9	131	....
Robinson, 2d p	67	1	66	....
Moon	99	2	97	....
Franklin	51	2	49	....
Baldwin, 1st p	24	1	23	....
Baldwin, 2d p	69	6	63	....
Ross, 1st p	96	8	88	....
Ross, 2d p	65	5	60	....
McCandless	61	6	55	....
East Deer	112	10	102	....
Upper St. Clair	83	1	84	....
North Fayette	59	4	55	....
Neville	24	1	23	....
Stowe, 1st p	33	0	33	....
Shaler, 2d p	37	4	33	....
Fawn	58	4	48	....
Wilkins, 1st p	197	29	177	....
Wilkins, 2d p	88	3	85	....
Patton, 1st p	44	1	43	....
Patton, 2d p	73	1	72	....
North Versailles	92	0	93	....
South Versailles, 1st p	No returns.			
South Versailles, 2d p	15	5	10	....
South Versailles, 3d p	53	10	43	....
Jefferson	104	0	104	....
Charters	101	2	99	....
Findlay	142	1	141	....
Ohio	49	2	47	....
Reserve	64	0	64	....
Aleppo	95	0	95	....
Pine	52	0	52	....
Indiana, 1st p	61	3	58	....
Indiana, 2d p	29	7	22	....
Lower St. Clair	76	14	62	....
South Fayette	88	0	88	....
Newickley	6	2	....	8
Crescent	24	1	23	....
Richland	49	10	39	....
Union	86	9	77	....
Hampton	55	17	38	....
Scott, 1st p	85	1	84	....
Scott, 2d p	26	4	32	....
Marshall	40	9	49	....
Harrison	131	1	130	....
Lincoln	48	5	43	....
Forward	67	1	74	....
Stowe	32	1	31	....
Total vote For				18,009
Total vote Against				1,835
				16,167

LIST OF PATENTS.

Issued from the United States Patent Office to Citizens of the States of Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Following is the list of patents issued from the United States Patent Office to citizens of the States of Pennsylvania and Ohio, for the week ending December 18, 1873, furnished for the COMMERCIAL from the office of J. McC. Perkins & Co., counselors at law and solicitors for American and Foreign patents, Washington, D. C.:

Spherical Gear, or Universal Joint—T. Weaver, Harrisburg.

Car Coupling—J. F. Mallowny and S. R. Brooks, Pittsburgh, and J. Cope, Connellsville.

Bee Hive—D. W. C. Calvin, East Fallowfield.

Railway Time Signal—J. Fend and J. W. Stevenson, Johnstown.

Can Coupling—J. C. Maloy, Johnstown.

Machine for Sewing Tin Cans—H. T. Vaders, Lansdale.

Harness Fastener—J. G. Fleming, Cochranton.

Lamp Comb—A. H. Reid, Brandywine Manor.

Grate—S. Kepner, Pottstown.

Crane—J. L. Pennock, Coatesville.

Marker, Seed Planter and Cultivator—C. H. & F. Logan, Pawling

Weekly Commercial.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1873.

Wanted.

WEEKLY COMMERCIALS of the following dates to complete our files: February 8th, July 13th and September 28th 1872, and March 1st, 1873.

MOTTO for Congressional back-paysters:

"I know the right, and I approve it too;
I know the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

THE vote for State Senators, in New York, at the late election shows a Republican majority in the vote of the whole State, of 28,208.

HON. WM. H. ARMSTRONG, of Lycoming, was erroneously reported as limiting his political aspirations to a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court. He aims higher, however, and is a candidate for Governor. We commend to his attention the wise counsel contained in the Western adage—"Hold your hosses!"

THE Illinois Farmers' Association, which recently met in that State and framed a political platform, is a separate organization from the "Grangers," although often confounded with them. It appears to be composed mainly of Democratic politicians, who have stolen the livery of the farmers to serve their party in.

THE Governor has issued the annual proclamation required by law, as to the amount of State debt cancelled during the fiscal year ending November 30, 1873, and it sets forth that the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund have, within that period, redeemed and cancelled State bonds amounting to $1,504,672.

A DEMOCRATIC paper before us is hopeful that some good will come out of its party, yet eighty Democratic members of the House voted for FERNANDO WOOD, while only fifty of them voted against a reduction of expenditures. It is concluded that thirty of the eighty must already have experienced a slight change of heart.

THE President, it is gratifying to know, fully agrees with Mr. DAWES, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, in regard to efforts for greater economy. He expresses the opinion that if Congress would put the knife to the throat of most of the "jobs" presented, fresh taxation might still be avoided; a conclusion in which most people will be apt to cordially concur.

THE people of the town of Henderson, Texas, had a real old fashioned Democratic celebration over the recent Bourbon victory in that State. They made a bonfire of a colored school house, mobbed the "Yankee" teacher, and wound up the festivities by hanging a "Radical" negro. Then—their cup of rejoicing being full—they quietly retired to their couches, to dream over their glorious victory.

ADVICES from Washington are to the effect that the House of Representatives is almost equally divided on the question of inflation. The canal jobs are not as strong as has been supposed. Individual members have their pet projects, but each man dislikes to vote for the scheme proposed by his neighbor. A good deal of heavy log-rolling will be necessary to give any of them a chance at present.

IS DEMOCRACY organized Tweedism? According to the State Adjutor, Democratic Kentucky has lost over half a million of dollars by defaulting sheriffs, while the report of an investigation in the strongest Democratic county in Ohio, just concluded, closes with this suggestive observation: "Thus far, it will be seen that every officer in Butler county whose books I have examined, proves to be a defaulter."

THE House of Representatives was particularly careful not to give the public any chance to know how its members voted on the final passage of the reduced salary bill, having refused to order the yeas and nays. This kind of trickery is well understood, and as the Democrats were as active in it as their opponents, we hope they will have the grace to abide by their own action, without trying to throw the blame on other shoulders.

THE prospects of our export trade for the winter are unusually favorable. The wants of European consumers are so pressing and the supply is so limited, that it is a matter of extreme importance to obtain every available bushel of grain in any part of the world. The activity of our foreign export trade during the winter will only be limited by the means of transportation and the stocks that may be available in the leading receiving and distributing centers in the interior.

THE latest weekly bulletin of the Patrons of Husbandry shows the continued rapid growth of that organization. The exact number of granges now in operation is 9,297, with a reported membership of 607,275. There are indications, however, that the movement is gradually drifting in a direction where it will ultimately lose a large part of its original supporters; for, having started out as an anti-monopoly movement, it now wants to make a monopoly out of the agricultural interests of the country.

"HON. HENRY W. GRADY" (we give him his full title), just convicted in New York as a participant in the "ring" frauds and for cheating the city in the erection of the Harlem court house, was elected last November as one of the regular candidates of the Democratic party for Assembly. His real character was as well understood then as now. His district is strongly Democratic, and he was elected by an overwhelming majority. His term of service, notwithstanding his election, will be spent in the penitentiary, and not in the Legislature.

THE seven votes in the Senate against the bill to appropriate four millions to pay for the naval expenditures caused by the Virginius flurry, were all cast by Democrats. If the money had not been spent and the honor of the nation had not been maintained, these seven Senators would have been among the first to cry out against the Government for not maintaining the honor of the flag: but now that that honor has been vindicated, they are unwilling to pay the cost of it. Whenever there is a chance to be disloyal, some men cannot resist the temptation in that direction.

THE whirligig of time brings about its revenges. When Congressman RAINEY, a colored member from South Carolina, rose in the House the other day to plead for the passage of the Civil Rights bill, BECK, a Democratic member from Kentucky, who had just concluded a furious tirade against the measure, suddenly rose from his seat and left the hall. There was a profound historical significance in the ex-slave, now a representative of the people, to one who was formerly, it is stated on good authority, a slave overseer. Perhaps he felt it, troublously.

THE action of the House on the Salary bill does not satisfy any one outside of Washington. It is justly regarded as an evasion of the duty imposed on Congress to restore salaries as they were, and the country will not rest satisfied with anything short of that. The members of the House may as well understand, first as last, that the trick of substituting a bill which gives them $6,000 a year for one that gave them only $5,000, is understood by the people. No one is deceived by it, and the members who have tried the hoodwinking game had better give it up, when the Senate gives them a chance.

A SOUTHERN paper which claims to speak by authority, says of JEFF DAVIS that "he does not care to enter Congress and play the part of the Atturian parrot seen by HUMBOLDT in the Azores, which spoke the language of the Atturians, an extinct Indian tribe, and whose words no one could understand." Just so. The sole shibboleth of the malignant traitor is now, as in the past, Rebellion and Slavery. The nation having consigned these to the limbo of unremembered darkness, there is no medium through which JEFF can interpret himself to the country or the country to him. He is simply a mumbling monument of a great people's mercy to a halter-deserving wretch.

THE Boston *Advertiser* refers uncomplimentarily to the House of Representatives at Washington as a "demoralized Congress." It would be strange if it were not demoralized. Popular clamor forced an increase of its numbers from 242 to 292; a majority of the old being new men. There is necessarily a brisk rivalry among all of them to distinguish themselves, and there does not yet appear to be, in the entire lot, one man with force enough to impress himself upon this raw mass as a leader. In the course of time the House will settle down into more regularity, and will range itself under such leaders as it can find; but in the meantime there must unavoidably be a struggle to determine who the leaders shall be.

WE see it stated that, upon the reassembling of Congress, a bill will be introduced providing for taxing the insurance interests of the country, under the direction of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue. The annual income from insurance, it is estimated, is about $300,000,000. The successful initiation of such a national taxation would probably lead to the establishment of a government supervision under a National Insurance Bureau, to which all companies would be compelled to report: the appropriate tax for each company being made up and collected through the collectors of internal revenue. It is understood that the National Board of Fire Underwriters have appointed a special committee to go to Washington to remonstrate against the passage of the bill, with such facts as are at their command.

THE MOTIVES OF THOSE WHO OPPOSED THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

The new Constitution having been adopted, our fight with it is over; but our party friends in other States having been led into taking such an erroneous view of the opposition to it, we are impelled to put in, here, a final word of explanation, before taking leave of the subject altogether.

The idea imbibed by the lookers on in other States seems to have been that the great object of the new Constitution was to prevent corruption in legislation, and that the opposition to it was confined to those who were interested in continuing legislative abuses. This false idea was held out in an address issued on the eve of the election by a committee of the members of the Constitutional Convention; but it was totally devoid of truth, and no one knew that fact better than the men who issued that address.

The opposition to the Constitution did not grow out of, nor was it directed against, the Article on Legislation. There were some exceptions taken to a few of its details, but, as a whole, that Article met with general approval, and if it had been submitted separately, as it should have been, it would have been adopted almost unanimously. Here and there among the tens of thousands who voted against the Constitution, as a whole, there may have been a few interested parties who would have voted against the Article on Legislation; but they were few and far between. The hostility to the Constitution grew out of its other provisions, and had no reference whatever to the efforts of the Convention to remedy the evils which had grown up around our system of special legislation.

For ourselves, we have always been warmly opposed to special legislation, and earnestly desirous to have a stop put to its corrupting influences. The Republican party of Pennsylvania was the first to take open and decided ground on this question. In the Republican State Convention held in 1871, the platform which the editor of this paper had the honor to present for its consideration and adoption, started off with this declaration:

"The Republicans of Pennsylvania assembled in Convention declare: *First*, We deem it the duty of the Legislature the immediate passage of an act calling a State Convention to revise and amend the Constitution for the purpose, among other things, of abolishing and prohibiting special legislation."

The Republican State Convention of 1872 followed this up by the following similar declaration:

"That we congratulate the people of Pennsylvania on the final accomplishment of the call for a Convention to revise and amend the Constitution of the State, and we earnestly urge upon our friends to see that delegates are chosen in their respective districts committed to the policy of incorporating in that instrument a clear and decisive prohibition of special legislation."

In 1873, after the Constitutional Convention had assembled, the Republican State Convention repeated the former utterances on this subject, and, fearful that the object of preventing special legislation might not be attained unless an article on that subject were submitted for a separate vote of the people, added a demand that whatever else the Constitutional Convention might do, or fail to do, the question of a reform in legislation should be submitted to a separate vote of the people. That resolution read thus:

"That while earnestly in favor of constitutional reform, and of such a revision of our State Constitution as will make it an effective instrument in punishing the corrupt abuses that have crept in under our present system, we demand emphatically and especially that whatever is done or left undone, the main purpose for which the Constitutional Convention was called, the absolute prevention of special legislation, shall be so placed before the people as to secure their separate and decisive expression thereon."

We cite these repeated resolutions for the double purpose of showing not only where the Republican party of the State stood on that question, but where we ourselves stood, personally, each of these resolutions having been drafted by the writer of this article. They show conclusively, that we (in common with our party) have consistently and steadily occupied the position of hostility to abuses and corruptness in legislation, and that the chief purpose of the Constitutional Convention was held to be to put an end to those abuses. To *that* part of the new Constitution neither we nor any one else has taken exception, saving some minor details thereof; and if the Constitutional Convention had confined itself to that issue, there would have been no opposition to its work.

It suited the purposes of the demagogues who thrust themselves into the lead of the supporters of the new Constitution to represent that the opposition to it grew out of hostility to the Article on Legislation, and was confined to those who made a trade of politics and held profitable hitherto by the corruptions at Harrisburg; but nothing could be further from the truth. The Article on Legislation, on the contrary, met with general approval; and the opposition to the Constitution grew mainly out of other and very different considerations. These were—

First—The refusal of the Convention to submit the Legislative and Judiciary articles to a separate vote. This many people felt to be their right, and they naturally resisted the attempt to deprive them of it.

Second—The clause requiring the ballot to be numbered.

Third—The grossly unfair and vicious basis of representation adopted in it and by which the State is outrageously gerrymandered for the benefit of the Democratic party.

Fourth—The incorporation in it of the anti-republican schemes of minority representation and cumulative voting.

These were held to be errors of a fundamental nature; and the refusal of the Convention to give the people the opportunity, which belonged to them, of voting separately on the Legislative article, left them no alternative but to vote against the whole. That was their judgment in the premises, which they were fairly entitled to exercise; and it is the grossest wrong to them, personally, to represent them as the friends of corruption in legislation, because they felt impelled to vote against an instrument that was, in so many other respects, obnoxious to them.

We append a table, to illustrate what we have said, which contains the names of prominent citizens of the State who openly opposed the new Constitution:

Hon. John Scott,	Hon. James Boyd,
Hon. Benj. H. Brewster,	Hon. Geo. E. Stanwood,
Hon. John M. Read,	Hon. H. W. Williams,
Hon. Asa ph E. Borie,	Hon. I. G. Gordon,
Hon. John Welsh,	Hon. Ulysses Mercur,
Hon. Geo. E Gowen,	Hon. Jno. M. Kirkpatrick,
Hon. George Lear,	Hon. Thos. M. Marshall.

These are the names of men well known outside the State, as well as in it—men known to be citizens of integrity and uprightness in all the relations of life, and we could increase the list largely, if it were needed. Can Mr. GEO. V. LAWRENCE, or Mr. JOHN W. FORNEY, or any of their coadjutors lay their fingers on the names of these men and say that they opposed the Constitution because they were the friends and beneficiaries of corrupt legislation? No man in Pennsylvania is bold enough, or reckless enough, or mendacious enough to do that. Every one will admit that they were actuated in their opposition by honest and conscientious convictions of duty; and the motives that actuated them, actuated the great mass of those who voted in consonance with them.

Let it be fairly understood, then, that the opposition to the Constitution did not grow out of the provisions in it regarding Legislation, but out of other and totally distinct causes. So far as the *Commercial* is concerned we are now, as we always have been, the open foe of corruption everywhere, no matter by whom practiced. We are not so sanguine as to believe that the new Constitution will bring about the millennium, or regenerate the hearts of the people; but for whatever it may contribute towards checking or preventing corruption in the Legislature or elsewhere we shall be heartily thankful. If the Article on Legislation had been submitted to a separate vote, we should have supported it cordially, although we believe it materially defective in some of its provisions, and it would have met with no opposition anywhere.

We shall not recur to this subject again, unless driven to it. The Constitution is adopted and, so far as we are concerned, it shall have a fair trial. Those who opposed its adoption did so because they had the right, and because their sense of duty led them in that direction, and they are entitled to have their motives not only respected but fairly represented. The current impression abroad, cultivated assiduously by some of the indiscreet friends of the new instrument, that their opposition sprang from mercenary and interested motives, does them a gross injustice; and having done our share towards correcting it, we leave the further correction of it to those who originally inflicted it.

ONE noticeable fact in connection with the salary-grab debate is that nearly all the members who have had the effrontery to defend the grab are Democrats. Guilty as some of the Republican members are in connection with the salary increase, very few attempt now to defend their conduct, or to oppose the evident desire of the people on the subject. This is not the case with a large number of the Democratic members. They have over and over again declared that they shall oppose repeal at every stage, and if finally, both Houses fail to reduce the salary, it will be owing greatly to the fact that so many opposition members vehemently favor the retention of the present pay.

THE CONTEST IN FRANCE.

A few days ago, a cable dispatch from Paris stated that the men of the Right, discouraged or frightened by the remarkable success of the Republicans in the late elections to fill vacancies in the Assembly, had resolved to propose such a limitation of universal suffrageas would deprive four millions of citizens of their electoral franchise. A still later dispatch mentions the purpose of the Right to restrict suffrage as having been already reduced to a project or form of law submitted to the council of State by the MACMAHON government. Whether any such plan is seriously entertained or not, may be a question, but there is no room for doubt that, the monarchists who prolonged the power of MACMAHON, are deeply despondent and perhaps really anxious in view of the evident expansion of what is called Republicanism among the electors. It also seems likely enough that, in the restriction of the right to vote among the class or classes whose Republican proclivities are plainly incurable, they may see the only available method of preventing complications very embarrassing to the President. At the same time, the attempt to limit universal suffrage is probably a measure which the most reckless or daring of the Royalists can not contemplate without the gravest apprehensions. At different times within the last two or three years, two ways have been suggested in which suffrage might be limited with least offense and with most likelihood of excluding objectionable voters without affecting voters already favorable or easily rendered favorable to the existing government. The ways proposed are, first, to fix political majority—that is the right to vote at—the age of twenty-five years instead of twenty—as at present; and, second, to require a residence of three years in the electoral district. While the first of these changes would affect all classes alike, the second condition would affect exclusively or chiefly the artisan (ouvriere) class, whose employment renders unavoidable a frequent change of abode on the part of many of them. Agricultural laborers, on the other hand, are usually as stable as their fields and cottages, and are besides so conservative that their support may be confidently looked for by the powers that be, little mat er who or what the powers happen to be.

Whether already a movement or not, an attempt to limit universal suffrage so plainly belongs to the policy of the Right that no one either in France or elsewhere, need be surprised to hear of its being made. It is already manifest, indeed, the Royalists make no secret of the fact that, under the MACMAHON government, the struggle is still to go on for the restoration of monarchy. Ten days ago, a petition, bearing 120,000 signatures, and asking for a king, was presented in the Assembly by the deputy, M. DAHIREL, and we shall likely soon hear of counter-petitions yet more numerously signed. In fact, it was indiscreet of the monarchists to invite a contest in the form of petitions, as the Republican journal has remarked, it challenges a comparison unfavorable to the Royalist party. If the question were to be decided by mere numbers; if petitions signed only by actual electors were to settle the form of government, the Republican triumph would be easy. The strength of the monarchical party does not consist in its numbers, as many members of the party would probably admit. Whether they are strictly correct in claiming as they do to have on their side a majority of the thoughtful and rigorously moral element of the population, with a preponderance of the natural wealth, is a question at least doubtful, and one, besides, with which a foreigner cannot safely meddle. Any useful discussion of the subject would have to begin with careful definitions of some of the adjectives used in stating the question. In favor of a part of the Royalist claim it may be urged, indeed, is urged with decided plausibility, that the sympathies of the feminine moiety of the people are unmistakably with the champions of monarchy. If this were really the case, the question as to which of the parties in the more moral and religious might be considered as ahead. The truth, however, appears to be that French women are for the most part in politics adiaphorous, concerning themselves little if at all with the subject, and quite free from those clear convictions which distinguish their sisters in some other countries. But this statement must be somewhat restricted in two directions. The women of the ouvriere or workman class are fierce politicians, thinking and going hand in hand with their fathers and brothers. In this respect they are true to the traditions of their revolutionary grandmothers, *petroleuses*, etc., have brilliantly exemplified their grandmothers' spirit as displayed with different weapons. *They* had no petroleum. At the other extremity of the social scale, the ladies of the nobility, old and new, especially those of the old, appear to be vehement and uncompromising politicians, and as the supporters of Comte CHAMBORD they are believed to have exerted a very powerful influence. Their loyalty is ascribed to several causes, the pomp and splendors of a court in which possess many of them congenial attractions, but the more important motive which animates them is perhaps their devotion to the church. No one needs to be informed that HENRY V. is not only an exceedingly pious, but a transcendantly ortho-lox man, whose piety and orthodoxy have been recognized by the very highest authority as worthy of admiration. It is, therefore, no wonder that a great number of the ladies of Nantes, in the enthusiasm of their piety and patriotism, undiscouraged by what has happened, and unrepelled by the Comte's suicidal letter, are still determined to have him for their King. Their task would seem to be a hopeless one; perhaps their faith is that of "the impossible." At any rate, on the fete day of SAINTE ELIZABETH of Hungary, they addressed to Monseigneur one of the most fervent petitions HENRY V. can ever yet have received. Beginning with a prayer to God to accord the hour of his return, they "implore Monseigneur to come and teach them to become a nation truly christian and French, that the hearts of all may soon in unison repeat: "Long live HENRY V."

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PROFESSOR AGASSIZ AMERICANIZED.

It is reasonable to expect that in due time a complete and satisfactory biography of the late Professor AGASSIZ will be given to the world, and if the great naturalist has left memoirs, diaries, etc., as materials for such a work, the book will be all the more valuable and entertaining. In the meantime, the daily and weekly newspapers are doing what they can to revive familiar and to impart fresh knowledge concerning the man lately gone; the monthly magazines and the reviews will presently furnish more abundant details of his career and more carefully considered estimates of his character. While regarded with affectionate admiration by those who knew him more or less intimately, Professor AGASSIZ awakened a lively interest in the general public, even in persons who cared little for the pursuits by which he became famous. Hundreds, or even thousands of people in almost every section of the country, to whom the word "glacier" still conveys vague meaning and to whom "fishes" are simply things to be caught and eaten, yet felt profound respect for AGASSIZ.

Generally expressed, one reason of the esteem in which Professor AGASSIZ was held by the American people was his capacity to understand them and their institutions. Though nearly forty years old when he came to the United States, a period of life at which a man's opinions and prejudices regarding society, manners, institutions, etc., are usually very strong, if not fixed, he proved that he was not too old to become Americanized. True, he was a Swiss, born and brought up under a republican government; but one must not therefore suppose that no or few strange and at first repulsive contrasts presented themselves to the newcomer. And a savant, already illustrious in the possession of a European reputation, might seem all the more liable to yield to the temptation of contempt or of unreserved disapproval for the novel arrangements and the apparently crude, provincial sentiment prevalent in the youthful republic. Nothing of the sort befell Professor AGASSIZ; his sound common sense, scientific spirit, and genuine, comprehensive culture saved him from the mistakes so often made by inferior men. Instead of scorning or quietly repelling as wrong whatever in popular sentiment or social customs he here found different from what he had been familiar with in Europe, he applied himself to the study of American institutions and American character, in the same spirit in which he studied the natural history of the country, and though he by no means learned to admire all American customs or to adopt all American opinions, he did learn to comprehend both the customs and the opinions.

It is a mistake to believe that the views favorable to slavery, at one time taught by AGASSIZ, were the result of either sympathy with American slaveholders, or of the adoption of American prejudices. Though they undoubtedly recommended the scholar who held them to the good will and patronage of slaveholders and to some wealthy men in the North, he had found them in Europe and brought them with him to this country. Professor CARL VOGT, with whom AGASSIZ had been associated in research, could, no doubt, give satisfactory testimony on this subject.

On the other hand, the views finally attained by the Professor on the subjects of Sabbath observance and the temperance question were the results of his study of American history and institutions, and of his personal observations in the United States. Of course, concerning both those subjects he brought with him the opinions and prejudicies of a continental European, and was led to exchange them for other views only through the conviction that they are not adapted to promote the best interests of the American people. As to temperance in the technical sense of the word, a man of his sense and science could hardly fail to perceive that there is somewhat in the American climate and in the American temperament which throws around the use of intoxicating drinks, conditions unknown or little known in Europe, and that the consequence is a practical problem of tremendous import, which still remains for the American people to solve, if they are to remain their own rulers. The Sunday question also must early have presented itself to the mind of AGASSIZ as involving a most momentous interest in connection with a republican government, apart from the intimate association of the day of rest and reflection with the moulding period of American history. When a people are free from the cares of self-government and ruled by a few superiors, aided by a standing army, it may matter little how they spend their leisure; but the foreigner who fails to see the use of one quiet day in seven to American republicans has yet to learn the first elements of American polity. And it is certainly an instructive fact that such adopted citizens of the Republic as Professor AGASSIZ, Dr. FRANCIS LIEBER, etc., men of thorough culture and scientific spirit, never, after sufficient observation, fail to recognize the political and social importance of those American customs and prepossessions which uneducated or half-educated foreigners denounce as mere outgrowths of ignorance and superstition, or else deride and scoff at as the fruitage of canting hypocrisy.

To pretend that Professor AGASSIZ was influenced by interested motives in adopting prevalent American views on the questions referred to, implies a very imperfect knowledge of the character of the man. No foreigner among us ever proved himself more completely above the meanness and servility of place, when there was occasion, he never hesitated to express with the utmost frankness his opinion of defects and wrongs in American institutions. Thus he criticised the New England schools, and did not spare even those of Boston, and, in fact, well performed the part of an educational reformer.

RETRENCHMENT INSTEAD OF TAXATION.

The theory of Mr. DAWES, the Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, that it is better to cut down our expenditures to the level of our income, than to attempt to increase the latter by the imposition of new taxes or the revival of old ones, is the correct one, if it be practicable. Whether the country is prosperous or unfortunate, the government must still go on, and its unavoidable expenses must be met. The interest on our debt must be promptly paid, and all the needed machinery of government kept steadily in motion, no matter how the imports may fall off and the revenue be curtailed. The practical question of the hour is, can all this be done with the revenues we seem tolerably certain of receiving?

Mr. DAWES says it can be done. Perhaps he is over-sanguine, either as to the probable revenue of the year, or as to the reductions in the estimates that are likely to be made; but if he be anything near right in his figures, the policy he proposes is, beyond all question, the proper one.

We confess that, looking at the weekly tables of imports and revenue received at New York, our faith in the ability of the government to raise enough money from present sources of taxation to carry on the government is not very strong. When, week after week, the imports of dry goods at New York dwindle below a million, we are they used to run to three and five millions weekly, and the revenue from customs falls off from $3,000,000 a week to $1,500,000, it seems an impossibility to make both ends meet. For, be it remembered, this is not a mere temporary falling off in the national income. It has continued for months, and is still continuing, as far as can be seen.

That the estimates should be cut down, and with an unsparing hand, we admit; but after that relentless knife of Mr. DAWES has cut off every superfluous item of expenditures, there will, we fear, be more left to be raised from the revenue of the current year will be able to care for. BEN. BUTLER struck the right note, in this matter, when he remarked that this is a constantly growing country, and its government must possess the means of them congenial attractions, but the more important motive which animates them is perhaps their devotion to the church. No one needs to be informed that HENRY V. is not only an exceedingly pious, but a transcendantly ortho-lox man, whose piety and orthodoxy have been recognized by the very highest authority as worthy of admiration. It is, therefore, no wonder that a great number of the ladies of Nantes, in the enthusiasm of their piety and patriotism, undiscouraged by what has happened, and unrepelled by the Comte's suicidal letter, are still determined to have him for their King. Their task would seem to be a hopeless one; perhaps their faith is that of "the impossible." At any rate, on the fete day of SAINTE ELIZABETH of Hungary, they addressed to Monseigneur one of the most fervent petitions HENRY V. can ever yet have received. Beginning with a prayer to God to accord the hour of his return, they "implore Monseigneur to come and teach them to become a nation truly christian and French, that the hearts of all may soon in unison repeat: "Long live HENRY V."

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LOOSE IDEAS OF BANKING.

We hope no one of the rising generation of bankers and financiers will fail to read and profit by the revelations made before the Finance Committee as to the management of the Nation Trust Company. It is a most astounding revelation; and the young men who are to be our future bank presidents, directors and cashiers should read it carefully, in order to guard themselves from ever falling into such blunders.

The directors of this bank admitted that they really knew nothing of its affairs or condition. They trusted implicitly to the cashier, and never examined the books, or verified an account, or took the necessary steps to satisfy themselves that every thing was right. "The Cashier," the book-keeper says, "was the bank." There was a President, and a Board of Directors, and a book-keeper; but "the Cashier was the bank," the other officers being mere appendages. Useful appendages, however, some of them proved to be to the Cashier; for the book-keeper frankly admits that he altered the books at his bidding, to hoodwink the Directors, when a merely nominal investigation was going on, and even added the alterations when the attempt at investigation was over. The Cashier seems to have been very lucky in finding a book-keeper pliable enough to suit his purposes.

The position we took, a few days since, as to the responsibilities of men in public positions, apply with equal force to men acting in a fiduciary capacity. The responsibility of properly managing a bank rests on the directors. They cannot throw that responsibility off on to their cashier. He, too, is responsible in his place; but *their* responsibilities cannot be thrown off upon *him*. The Water Commissioners were culpable in leaving their great trust in the hands of their secretary; and bank directors are just as culpable who trust everything to their employees.

We mean nothing personal in these remarks, and make no personal application of them. But we are warranted in making these revelations the text of a renewed effort to impress on the minds of all our readers that the great trouble we are laboring under, as a people, is the decayed sense of personal responsibility which has rendered such events possible. It is not material to inquire who or what is to blame for it; but it is the duty of every man who assumes a trust to cultivate that high sense of personal responsibility which should impel him to look as carefully after the business of others entrusted to him as to his own. The President of the Nation Trust Company would not sign his name to a note until he was indemnified for it by the directors, which was all right and proper; but why did he not give the same attention to the affairs of his bank as to his own signature? We say this, not for the purpose of discussing his case individually, or of singling him out, but simply because it is the instance which, for the present, turns up to our hand. Every man whose name is published as a bank director virtually asks the public, thereby to trust his bank on the strength of the names of the men who have undertaken to give their personal attention to its affairs. The responsibility which every director assumes is a personal one; and there can be no safety to either the bank or those who do business with it, where this sense of personal responsibility is not carefully maintained and cultivated.

THE CHORPENNING CLAIM.

MR. CESSNA made an effort, on Friday last, to get the Chorpenning claim again before Congress; but the temper of the House seems to have been so ominous and forbidding that he took counsel from prudence and withdrew the papers, after presenting them. CHORPENNING, the holder of this claim, lives in Somerset county, and being a constituent of Mr. CESSNA, it is all right that that gentleman should present the papers in the case, as well as avail himself of the chance to put himself right on the record, but beyond rendering this proper service to a citizen of his district, the less Mr. CESSNA has to do with this claim the better for himself. Let Mr. CHORPENNING be heard, by all means. That is his right, as well as every man's. But the claim is odorous, beyond all question; and the odor that hangs about it is not that of sanctity.

The immaculate Judge BLACK is, or was, the attorney for this claim. No man in Pennsylvania has indulged more freely than he in denouncing corruption in the Legislature and elsewhere throughout the State; yet he seems zealous in promoting the fishy claims of this client of his. In the Congress before the last the claim was examined thoroughly, and when its character was exposed it was fairly hooted out of the House. It is a delightful thing to know that we have such pure men and such earnest lawyers as Judge BLACK; but our appreciation of his efforts in that direction is somewhat modified when we picture him as hanging about the corridors of the House, besetting members with arguments in behalf of CHORPENNING and his claim.

We have a fancy, from the tone of the remarks of Mr. DAWES and Mr. BECK on this claim, that a present resurrection of it will not do much good to the claimant; and our advice to Mr. CESSNA, while seeing that his constituent has fair play, is to keep his hands clear of advocating it. Mr. CHORPENNING has his attorney; let him handle the pitch, if he will.

ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAMS.

The prospect at Washington for the confirmation of the nomination of Attorney General WILLIAMS, as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, is so unpromising that the President will probably withdraw it when the Senate meets again.

No one is inclined to believe the personal charges made against the Attorney General. He has, in all his public life, preserved a high character for personal integrity and purity, and if there were no other objections than these to his confirmation, they would not weigh against him in the balance.

The real reason that weighs against his confirmation is that the Senate feels, and the country feels, that there are men better fitted for the place, and that the selection should be made from among them. The personal worth of the Attorney General is conceded, and it is also frankly admitted that he possesses legal ability of a high order. Of a very high order, we might say, but yet not of the highest; and as the Chief Justiceship is the highest legal position that is attainable, there is a very natural repugnance to putting any man in it whose name does not carry with it the conviction that he is the right man for the place. Unfortunately, the name of the Attorney General does not carry that conviction with it, and the President should relieve the Senate from the unpleasant task of saying no to his confirmation.

The Chief Justiceship is a place of so much importance, and is held in such great esteem, that a nomination for it should be of such a character as to command instant and general approval. A nomination that has to be haggled over for a month must be regarded as defective, and, even if confirmed, would carry with it a degree of doubt in the public mind that is little short of condemnation. There are, at least, a dozen of names from which the President can pick, either of which will go through the Senate without delay, and that is the list to pick from.

VOTE ON THE CONSTITUTION.

We have the following official returns of the popular vote on the Constitution:

	For.	Against.
Allegheny	18,092	1,835
Philadelphia	79,116	24,991
Lancaster	8,182	4,441
Dauphin	3,119	4,031
Erie	3,581	2,104
Washington	4,626	638
Northampton	3,245	2,561
Lehigh	3,172	1,597
Erie	6,621	742
Blair	2,761	2,040
Northumberland	3,113	1,620
Perry	1,491	1,046
Berks	9,114	1,580
Lycoming	3,814	1,747
Huntingdon	4,484	494
Potter	898	99
Union	1,599	317
Montgomery	12,000	2,900
Bedford	2,311	774
Centre	1,806	174
Clearfield	1,425	1,284
Fountain	2,904	1,578
Philada	1,358	161
Schuylkill	6,158	2,020

In these twenty-four counties the negative vote is 62,163; and the remaining forty-two counties will doubtless swell those figures to over 100,000, the total vote polled being about 350,000, or about half the actual voting force of the State.

THE reading of the report of the Finance Committee, before the City Councils, yesterday, embodying the results of their investigation into the affairs of the Water Commission, was followed by the resignation of the entire Board of Water Commissioners. Mr. MCGOWAN, City Controller, had tendered his resignation to the Finance Committee, and it was presented to Councils with the report. The resignations were all accepted. It will be seen by the report, which is printed in full elsewhere, that the Finance Committee have come squarely up the work, and have not attempted to screen anybody or hide anything. The Committee, while censuring the Water Commissioners for their inexcusable negligence and dereliction of duty, yet recognize the fact that the Commissioners have rendered important services without compensation, and that no evidence whatever had been obtained against them of any complicity in the fraudulent transactions under investigation. The Controller is likewise censured for inexcusable negligence and dereliction of duty, but the committee state that nothing was discovered in the testimony to warrant any suspicion of intended dishonesty on his part. The Finance Committee recommend the abolishment of the Water Commission, and the adoption of some new plan for completing the water investigation.

THE WAYS and Means Committee do not seem anxious to father the idea of increased taxation; and yet, heavily as they are at present burdened, the people would unquestionably prefer a slight increase of taxation to any increase of debt. The Commissioner of Internal Revenue, however, is represented as saying that the government receipts in his department are now as large as they were before the panic, and as believing that they will exceed the estimate by three or four million dollars by the end of the fiscal year. If this opinion should prove correct, it will take $25,000,000 to $28,000,000 from Secretary RICHARDSON'S estimated deficit of $42,000,000, while the remainder will be still further reduced by the increase in impost duties which is reasonably looked for. For these reasons the committee conclude that, at the outside figure, the deficit will not exceed $15,000,000, and hence they are disposed to move cautiously in legislating new taxes upon the people. Some additional increase will however, most probably prove necessary; and there are modes of taxation, should Congress be wise enough to discern them, which are neither onerous nor obnoxious.

THE Supreme Court of the United States has within a short times past rendered five decisions which are of considerable importance as related to the question of local taxation. The first of these decisions denies the right of States to tax imported goods in the original packages, on the ground that the right to import carries with it an unrestricted right to sell. The second denies the right of States to tax national property, or the national credit (bonds), on the ground that the right to tax carries with it the right to destroy. The third decides that the port of registry of a vessel is its proper domicile for purposes of State taxation; the fourth denies to States the power to tax the shares of all forms of commercial paper between States, as a restriction on domestic commerce; and the fifth denies extra-territorial operation to the tax laws of a State, and under that head denies the right of a State to tax a corporation on its bonds or stock, or their coupons, which are held out of the Commonwealth. All these decisions are of general public interest and consequence.

THE *Financial Chronicle* notes the existence of two wholesome features in the money market. The first has to do with the bank currency; the other with the bank reserves. As to the bank notes, they have been accumulating in New York in considerable amounts during the past month, but they are no longer to say this, not for the purpose of discussing his case individually, or of singling him out, but simply because it is the instance which, for the present, turns up to our hand. Every man whose name is published as a bank director virtually asks the public, thereby to trust his bank on the strength of the names of the men who have undertaken to give their personal attention to its affairs. The responsibility which every director assumes is a personal one; and there can be no safety to either the bank or those who do business with it, where this sense of personal responsibility is not carefully maintained and cultivated.

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ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAMS.

The prospect at Washington for the confirmation of the nomination of Attorney General WILLIAMS, as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, is so unpromising that the President will probably withdraw it when the Senate meets again.

No one is inclined to believe the personal charges made against the Attorney General. He has, in all his public life, preserved a high character for personal integrity and purity, and if there were no other objections than these to his confirmation, they would not weigh against him in the balance.

The real reason that weighs against his confirmation is that the Senate feels, and the country feels, that there are men better fitted for the place, and that the selection should be made from among them. The personal worth of the Attorney General is conceded, and it is also frankly adm